

FAMOUS STORIES OF HIGH ADVENTURE

REPRODUCED

Famous Stories of **HIGH ADVENTURE**

Selected and Edited by
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with illustrations by Carol Barker

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Preface

IN this book is almost a score of gripping stories by renowned and deservedly famous story-tellers.

They differ greatly in plot and style, in time and setting, in their type of characters and in their varying appeal. Some are historical stories, others are about travellers and castaways, some are ancient, others modern. However, all have one characteristic in common that gives to each a strong appeal for the reader who wants to be engrossed in a story of action.

They are all stories of high adventure.

The term is used to convey not simply an event or an episode that can be truthfully described as adventurous, but one in which the central character or characters have the choice of accepting or refusing a hazard offering adventure. This applies equally to the schoolboy deciding to fight a bully or a diver exploring the bed of the ocean, an heroic young prince facing a legendary monster or a brave fisherman refusing to be destroyed by the dangers of a mighty whirlpool, a hot-tempered courtier who demands satisfaction because he has been deceived or a grubby-faced boy faking his own death and escaping to a remote island where he is thought to be a ghost.

All the stories included in this book are good reading, whatever their flavour and content. Some are even hallmarked by the term "classic". None is dull, because in every one things happen and people perform at their best. They are stories that can be read and re-read time and again. Most of them are stories one will not grow too old to read as long as one enjoys good reading.

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They are not re-told tales. Each is in the words of the well-known writer who penned it. In some cases they have been cut to make them more effective for the purpose of this book, but in no case have extra words been added to the original text.

However, each has been provided with its own special introduction to ensure that the reader is presented with a preview, as it were, of the various characters and the backgrounds against which they move. The stories are therefore quite complete in themselves.

Having read these stories, perhaps the reader will be stimulated to read others by the same authors. There are whole libraries of their works to choose from, and it would take a lifetime to read them all.

Should some readers be challenged to try out the truth of this, they can be comforted by one warm thought. There are few more rewarding ways of using one's leisure time than in reading.

But one of those few is, very definitely, re-reading.



A Greenwood Encounter

SIR WALTER SCOTT

INTO the green light of the forest rides the Black Knight, who is Richard of England returned to his realm in secret, accompanied by the faithful jester Wamba. They are set upon, and Cœur-de-Lion is hard pressed when from the greenwood's depths comes the band of outlaws commanded by the leader known as Locksley. When the King's safety is assured Richard learns of how his brother John plotted against his life, and also the real identity of the outlaw leader who has been of such service to the disguised monarch. The other adventures of the Black Knight and Locksley's band are recounted in *Ivanhoe*, from which this story is taken.

The Black Champion and his guide were pacing at their leisure through the recesses of the forest—the good Knight

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whiles humming to himself the lay of some enamoured troubadour, sometimes encouraging by questions the prating disposition of his attendant, so that their dialogue formed a whimsical mixture of song and jest, of which we would fain give our readers some idea. You are, then, to imagine this Knight, strong of person, tall, broad-shouldered, and large of bone, mounted on his mighty black charger, which seemed made on purpose to bear his weight, so easily he paced forward under it, having the visor of his helmet raised, in order to admit freedom of breath, yet keeping the beaver, or under part, closed, so that his features could be but imperfectly distinguished. But his ruddy embrowned cheek-bones could be plainly seen, and the large and bright blue eyes, that flashed from under the dark shade of the raised visor; and the whole gesture and look of the champion expressed careless gaiety and fearless confidence—a mind which was unapt to apprehend danger, and prompt to defy it when most imminent—yet with whom danger was a familiar thought, as with one whose trade was war and adventure.

The Jester wore his usual fantastic habit, but late accidents had led him to adopt a good cutting falchion, instead of his wooden sword, with a targe to match it; of both which weapons he had, notwithstanding his profession, shown himself a skilful master. Indeed, the infirmity of Wamba's brain consisted chiefly in a kind of impatient irritability, which suffered him not long to remain quiet in any posture, or adhere to any certain train of ideas, although he was for a few minutes alert enough in performing any immediate task, or in apprehending any immediate topic. On horseback, therefore, he was perpetually swinging himself backwards and forwards, now on the horse's ears, then anon on the very rump of the animal—now hanging both his legs on one side, and now sitting with his face to the tail, moping, mowing, and making a thousand apish gestures, until his palfrey took his freaks so much to heart as fairly to lay him at his length on the green grass—an incident which greatly amused the Knight, but compelled his companion to ride more steadily thereafter.

At the point of their journey at which we take them up, this joyous pair were engaged in singing a virelai, as it was called, in

which the clown bore a mellow burden to the better instructed Knight of the Fetterlock.

"A dainty song," said Wamba, when they had finished their carol, "I used to sing it with Gurth, once my playfellow, and now, by the grace of God and his master, no less than a freeman; and we once came by the cudgel for being so entranced by the melody, that we lay in bed two hours after sunrise, singing the ditty betwixt sleeping and waking—my bones ache at thinking of the tune ever since."

The Jester next struck into another carol, a sort of comic ditty, to which the Knight, catching up the tune, replied in like manner.

"I would, Wamba," said the Knight, "that our host of the Trysting-tree, or the jolly Friar, his chaplain, heard this thy ditty in praise of our bluff yeoman."

"So would not I," said Wamba—"but for the horn that hangs at your baldric."

"Ay," said the Knight; "this is a pledge of Locksley's goodwill, though I am not like to need it. Three mots on this bugle will, I am assured, bring round, at our need, a jolly band of yonder honest yeomen."

"I would say, Heaven forefend," said the Jester, "were it not that that fair gift is a pledge they would let us pass peaceably."

"Why, what meanest thou?" said the Knight; "thinkest thou that but for this pledge of fellowship they would assault us?"

"Nay, for me I say nothing," said Wamba; "for green trees have ears as well as stone walls. But canst thou construe me this, Sir Knight—when is thy wine-pitcher and thy purse better empty than full?"

"Why, never, I think," replied the Knight.

"Thou never deservest to have a full one in thy hand for so simple an answer! Thou hadst best empty thy pitcher ere thou pass it to a Saxon, and leave thy money at home ere thou walk in the greenwood."

"You hold our friends for robbers, then?" said the Knight of the Fetterlock.

"You hear me not say so, fair sir," said Wamba. "It may relieve a man's steed to take off his mail when he hath a long journey to make; and, certes, it may do good to the rider's soul

to ease him of that which is the root of evil; therefore will I give no hard names to those who do such services. Only I would wish my mail at home, and my purse in my chamber, when I meet with these good fellows, because it might save them some trouble."

"We are bound to pray for them, my friend, notwithstanding the fair character thou dost afford them."

"Pray for them with all my heart," said Wamba; "but in the town, not in the greenwood, like the Abbot of Saint Bees, whom they caused to say mass in an old hollow oak-tree for his stall."

"Say as thou list, Wamba," replied the Knight, "these yeomen did thy master Cedric yeomanly service."

"Ay, truly," answered Wamba; "but that was in the fashion of their trade with Heaven."

"Their trade, Wamba! how mean you by that?" replied his companion.

"Marry, thus," said the Jester. "They make up a balanced account with Heaven, as our old cellarer used to call his ciphering—reckoning, doubtless, on their own behalf the sevenfold usury which the blessed text hath promised to charitable loans."

"Give me an example of your meaning, Wamba; I know nothing of ciphers or rates of usage," answered the Knight.

"Why," said Wamba, "an your valour be so dull, you will please to learn that those honest fellows balance a good deed with one not quite so laudable; as a crown given to a begging friar with an hundred byzants taken from a fat abbot, or a wench kissed in the greenwood with the relief of a poor widow."

"Which of these was the good deed, which was the felony?" interrupted the Knight.

"A good gibe! a good gibe!" said Wamba; "keeping witty company sharpeneth the apprehension. The merry-men of the forest set off the building of a cottage with the burning of a castle—the thatching of a choir against the robbing of a church—the setting free a poor prisoner against the murder of a proud sheriff—or, to come nearer to our point, the deliverance of a Saxon franklin against the burning alive of a Norman baron. Gentle thieves they are, in short, and courteous robbers; but it is ever the luckiest to meet with them when they are at the worst."

"How so, Wamba?" said the Knight.

"Why, then they have some compunction, and are for making up matters with Heaven. But when they have struck an even balance, Heaven help them with whom they next open the account! And yet," said Wamba, coming close up to the Knight's side, "there be companions who are far more dangerous for travellers to meet than yonder outlaws."

"And who may they be, for you have neither bears nor wolves, I trow?" said the Knight.

"Marry, sir, but we have Malvoisin's men-at-arms," said Wamba; "and let me tell you that, in time of civil war, a half-score of these is worth a band of wolves at any time. They are now expecting their harvest, and are reinforced. So that, should we meet with a band of them, we are like to pay for our feats of arms. Now, I pray you, Sir Knight, what would you do if we met two of them?"

"Pin the villains to the earth with my lance, Wamba, if they offered us any impediment."

"But what if there were four of them?"

"They should drink of the same cup," answered the Knight.

"What if six," continued Wamba, "and we as we now are, barely two—would you not remember Locksley's horn?"

"What! sound for aid," exclaimed the Knight, "against a score of such *rascaille* as these, whom one good knight could drive before him, as the wind drives the withered leaves?"

"Nay, then," said Wamba, "I will pray you for a close sight of that same horn that hath so powerful a breath."

The Knight undid the clasp of the baldric, and indulged his fellow-traveller, who immediately hung the bugle round his own neck.

"Tra-lira-la," said he, whistling the notes; "nay, I know my gamut as well as another."

"How mean you, knave?" said the Knight; "restore me the bugle."

"Content you, Sir Knight, it is in safe keeping. When Valour and Folly travel, Folly should bear the horn, because she can blow the best."

"Nay but, rogue," said the Black Knight, "this exceedeth thy license. Beware ye tamper not with my patience."

"Urge me not with violence, Sir Knight," said the Jester,

keeping at a distance from the impatient champion, "or Folly will show a clean pair of heels, and leave Valour to find out his way through the wood as best he may."

"Nay, thou hast hit me there," said the Knight; "and, sooth to say, I have little time to jangle with thee. Keep the horn an thou wilt, but let us proceed on our journey."

"You will not harm me, then?" said Wamba.

"I tell thee no, thou knave!"

"Ay, but pledge me your knightly word for it," continued Wamba, as he approached with great caution.

"My knightly word I pledge; only come on with thy foolish self."

"Nay, then, Valour and Folly are once more boon companions," said the Jester, coming up frankly to the Knight's side; "but, in truth, I love not such buffets as that you bestow. And now that Folly wears the horn, let Valour rouse himself and shake his mane; for, if I mistake not, there are company in yonder brake that are on the look-out for us."

"What makes thee judge so?" said the Knight.

"Because I have twice or thrice noticed the glance of a morion from amongst the green leaves. Had they been honest men, they had kept the path. But yonder thicket is a choice chapel for the Clerks of Saint Nicholas."

"By my faith," said the Knight, closing his visor, "I think thou be'st in the right on't."

And in good time did he close it, for three arrows flew at the same instant from the suspected spot against his head and breast, one of which would have penetrated to the brain, had it not been turned aside by the steel visor. The other two were averted by the gorget, and by the shield which hung around his neck.

"Thanks, trusty armourer," said the Knight.—"Wamba, let us close with them," and he rode straight to the thicket. He was met by six or seven men-at-arms, who ran against him with their lances at full career. Three of the weapons struck against him, and splintered with as little effect as if they had been driven against a tower of steel. The Black Knight's eyes seemed to flash fire even through the aperture of his visor. He raised himself in his stirrups with an air of inexpressible dignity, and exclaimed, "What means this, my masters?" The men made no other reply

than by drawing their swords and attacking him on every side, crying, "Die, tyrant!"

"Ha! Saint Edward! Ha! Saint George!" said the Black Knight, striking down a man at every invocation; "have we traitors here?"

His opponents, desperate as they were, bore back from an arm which carried death in every blow, and it seemed as if the terror of his single strength was about to gain the battle against such odds, when a knight in blue armour, who had hitherto kept himself behind the other assailants, spurred forward with his lance, and taking aim, not at the rider but at the steed, wounded the noble animal mortally.

"That was a felon stroke!" exclaimed the Black Knight, as the steed fell to the earth, bearing his rider along with him.

And at this moment Wamba winded the bugle, for the whole had passed so speedily, that he had not time to do so sooner. The sudden sound made the murderers bear back once more, and Wamba, though so imperfectly weaponed, did not hesitate to rush in and assist the Black Knight to rise.

"Shame on ye, false cowards!" exclaimed he in the blue harness, who seemed to lead the assailants, "do ye fly from the empty blast of a horn blown by a Jester?"

Animated by his words, they attacked the Black Knight anew, whose best refuge was now to place his back against an oak, and defend himself with his sword. The felon knight, who had taken another spear, watching the moment when his formidable antagonist was most closely pressed, galloped against him in hopes to nail him with his lance against the tree, when his purpose was again intercepted by Wamba. The Jester making up by agility the want of strength, and little noticed by the men-at-arms, who were busied in their more important object, hovered on the skirts of the fight, and effectually checked the fatal career of the Blue Knight, by hamstringing his horse with a stroke of his sword. Horse and man went to the ground. Yet the situation of the Knight of the Fetterlock continued very precarious, as he was pressed close by several men completely armed, and began to be fatigued by the violent exertions necessary to defend himself on so many points at nearly the same moment, when a grey-goose shaft suddenly stretched on the earth

one of the most formidable of his assailants, and a band of yeomen broke forth from the glade, headed by Locksley and the jovial Friar, who, taking ready and effectual part in the fray, soon disposed of the ruffians, all of whom lay on the spot dead or mortally wounded. The Black Knight thanked his deliverers with a dignity they had not observed in his former bearing, which hitherto had seemed rather that of a blunt bold soldier than of a person of exalted rank.

"It concerns me much," he said, "even before I express my full gratitude to my ready friends, to discover, if I may, who have been my unprovoked enemies.—Open the visor of that Blue Knight, Wamba, who seems the chief of these villains."

The Jester instantly made up to the leader of the assassins, who, bruised by his fall, and entangled under the wounded steed, lay incapable either of flight or resistance.

"Come, valiant sir," said Wamba, "I must be your armourer as well as your equerry—I have dismounted you, and now I will unhelm you."

So saying, with no very gentle hand he undid the helmet of the Blue Knight, which, rolling to a distance on the grass, displayed to the Knight of the Fetterlock grizzled locks, and a countenance he did not expect to have seen under such circumstances.

"Waldemar Fitzurse!" he said in astonishment; "what could urge one of thy rank and seeming worth to so foul an undertaking?"

"Richard," said the captive Knight, looking up to him, "thou knowest little of mankind, if thou knowest not to what ambition and revenge can lead every child of Adam."

"Revenge?" answered the Black Knight; "I never wronged thee. On me thou hast nought to revenge."

"My daughter, Richard, whose alliance thou didst scorn—was that no injury to a Norman, whose blood is noble as thine own?"

"Thy daughter?" replied the Black Knight; "a proper cause of enmity, and followed up to a bloody issue!—Stand back, my masters, I would speak to him alone.—And now, Waldemar Fitzurse, say me the truth—confess who set thee on this traitorous deed."

"Thy father's son," answered Waldemar, "who, in so doing, did but avenge on thee thy disobedience to thy father."

Richard's eyes sparkled with indignation, but his better nature overcame it. He pressed his hand against his brow, and remained an instant gazing on the face of the humbled baron, in whose features pride was contending with shame.

"Thou dost not ask thy life, Waldemar," said the King.

"He that is in the lion's clutch," answered Fitzurse, "knows it were needless."

"Take it, then, unasked," said Richard; "the lion preys not on prostrate carcasses. Take thy life, but with this condition, that in three days thou shalt leave England, and go to hide thine infamy in thy Norman castle; and that thou wilt never mention the name of John of Anjou as connected with thy felony. If thou art found on English ground after the space I have allotted thee, thou diest; or if thou breathest aught that can attain the honour of my house, by Saint George! not the altar itself shall be a sanctuary. I will hang thee out to feed the ravens from the very pinnacle of thine own castle.—Let this knight have a steed, Locksley, for I see your yeomen have caught those which were running loose, and let him depart unharmed."

"But that I judge I listen to a voice whose behests must not be disputed," answered the yeoman, "I would send a shaft after the skulking villain, that should spare him the labour of a long journey."

"Thou bearest an English heart, Locksley," said the Black Knight, "and well dost judge thou art the more bound to obey my behest—I am Richard of England!"

At these words, pronounced in a tone of majesty suited to the high rank and no less distinguished character of Cœur-de-Lion, the yeomen at once kneeled down before him, and at the same time tendered their allegiance, and implored pardon for their offences.

"Rise, my friends," said Richard, in a gracious tone, looking on them with a countenance in which his habitual good-humour had already conquered the blaze of hasty resentment, and whose features retained no mark of the late desperate conflict, excepting the flush arising from exertion,—*"arise,"* he said, *"my friends! Your misdemeanours, whether in forest or*

field, have been atoned by the loyal services you rendered my distressed subjects, and the rescue you have this day afforded to your sovereign. Arise, my liegemen, and be good subjects in future.—And thou, brave Locksley——”

“Call me no longer Locksley, my Liege, but know me under the name which, I fear, fame hath blown too widely not to have reached even your royal ears—I am Robin Hood of Sherwood Forest.”

“King of Outlaws, and Prince of good fellows!” said the King, “who hath not heard a name that has been borne as far as Palestine? But be assured, brave Outlaw, that no deed done in our absence, and in the turbulent times to which it hath given rise, shall be remembered to thy disadvantage.”

“True says the proverb,” said Wamba, interposing his word, but with some abatement of his usual petulance,—

‘When the cat is away,
The mice will play’.”

“What, Wamba, art thou there?” said Richard. “I have been so long of hearing thy voice, I thought thou hadst taken flight.”

“I take flight!” said Wamba; “when do you ever find Folly separated from Valour? There lies the trophy of my sword, that good grey gelding, whom I heartily wish upon his legs again, conditioning his master lay there houghed in his place. It is true, I gave a little ground at first, for a motley jacket does not brook lance-heads, as a steel doublet will. But if I fought not at sword’s point, you will grant me that I sounded the onset.”

“And to good purpose, honest Wamba,” replied the King. “Thy good service shall not be forgotten.”



A Dangerous Mission

ALEXANDRE DUMAS

D'ARTAGNAN, the young firebrand from Gascony who is the latest recruit to the King's Musketeers, captained by Monsieur de Tréville, becomes the secret messenger who must journey from Paris to England to deliver a message to the Duke of Buckingham. It is a message from the Queen of France, whose enemy Cardinal Richelieu does not want the message to arrive in England. D'Artagnan sets out with his three new-found comrades-in-arms, Athos, who has been wounded, Porthos, and Aramis, and their servants. He has to overcome danger and treachery to complete his mission successfully. What happens after he has delivered his message to the Duke, and how D'Artagnan and his friends meet again to render further service to the Queen and defeat her enemy the cardinal, is told in *The Three Musketeers*, from which this story is taken.

D'Artagnan went straight to M. de Tréville's. He had been there scarcely five minutes when M. de Tréville entered. At the first glance, and by the joy which was painted on his countenance, the worthy captain plainly perceived that something new was on foot.

All the way along D'Artagnan had been consulting with himself whether he should place confidence in M. de Tréville, or whether he should only ask him to give him *carte blanche* for some secret affair. But M. de Tréville had always been so thoroughly his friend, had always been so devoted to the king and queen, and hated the cardinal so cordially, that the young man resolved to tell him everything.

"Did you ask for me, my young friend?" said M. de Tréville.

"Yes, Monsieur," said D'Artagnan. "You will pardon me, I hope, for having disturbed you, when you know the importance of my business."

"Speak, then; I listen to you."

"It concerns nothing less," said D'Artagnan, lowering his voice, "than the honour, perhaps the life, of the queen."

"What do you say?" asked M. de Tréville, glancing round to see if they were surely alone, and then fixing his questioning look upon D'Artagnan.

"I say, Monsieur, that chance has rendered me master of a secret——"

"Which you will guard, I hope, young man, as your life."

"But which I must impart to you, Monsieur, for you alone can assist me in the mission I have just received from her Majesty."

"Is this secret your own?"

"No, Monsieur; it is her Majesty's."

"Are you authorised by her Majesty to communicate it to me?"

"No, Monsieur, for, on the contrary, I am desired to preserve the profoundest mystery."

"Why, then, are you about to betray it to me?"

"Because, as I said, without you I can do nothing; and I am afraid you will refuse me the favour I come to ask, if you do not know to what end I ask it."

"Keep your secret, young man, and tell me what you wish."

"I wish you to obtain for me, from M. d'Essart, leave of absence for fifteen days."

A Dangerous Mission

"When?"

"This very night."

"You leave Paris?"

"I am going on a mission."

"May you tell me whither?"

"To London."

"Has anyone an interest in preventing your arrival there?"

"The cardinal, I believe, would give the world to prevent my success."

"And you are going alone?"

"I am going alone."

"In that case you will not get beyond Bondy. I tell you so, by the faith of de Tréville."

"How so?"

"You will be assassinated."

"And I shall die in the performance of my duty."

"But your mission will not be accomplished."

"That is true," replied D'Artagnan.

"Believe me," continued de Tréville, "in enterprises of this kind, in order that one may arrive, four must set out."

"Ah, you are right, Monsieur," said D'Artagnan; "but you know Athos, Porthos, and Aramis, and you know if I can dispose of them."

"Without confiding to them the secret which I am not willing to know?"

"We are sworn, once for all, to implicit confidence and devotedness against all proof. Besides, you can tell them that you have full confidence in me, and they will not be more incredulous than you."

"I can send to each of them leave of absence for fifteen days, that is all,—to Athos, whose wound still makes him suffer, to go to the waters of Forges; to Porthos and Aramis to accompany their friend, whom they are not willing to abandon in such a painful condition. Sending their leave of absence will be proof enough that I authorise their journey."

"Thanks, Monsieur. You are a hundred times too good."

"Begone, then, find them instantly, and let all be done to-night! Ha! but first write your request to D'Essart. Perhaps you had a spy at your heels; and your visit, if it should

ever be known to the cardinal, will thus seem legitimate."

D'Artagnan drew up his request, and M. de Tréville, on receiving it, assured him that by two o'clock in the morning the four leaves of absence should be at the respective domiciles of the travellers.

"Have the goodness to send mine to Athos's residence. I should dread some disagreeable encounter if I were to go home."

"Be easy. Adieu, and a prosperous voyage. *A propos*," said M. de Tréville, calling him back.

D'Artagnan returned.

"Have you any money?"

D'Artagnan tapped the bag he had in his pocket.

"Enough?" asked M. de Tréville.

"Three hundred pistoles."

"Oh, plenty! That would carry you to the end of the world. Begone, then!"

D'Artagnan saluted M. de Tréville, who held out his hand to him; D'Artagnan pressed it with a respect mixed with gratitude. Since his first arrival at Paris, he had had constant occasion to honour this excellent man, whom he had always found worthy, loyal, and great.

His first visit was to Aramis. He had seldom seen the young musketeer; but every time he had seen him, he had remarked a deep sadness imprinted on his countenance.

This evening, especially, Aramis was melancholy and thoughtful. D'Artagnan asked some questions about this prolonged melancholy. Aramis pleaded as his excuse a commentary upon the eighteenth chapter of Saint Augustine, which he was forced to write in Latin for the following week, and which pre-occupied him a good deal.

After the two friends had been chatting a few moments, a servant from M. de Tréville entered, bringing a sealed packet.

"What is that?" asked Aramis.

"The leave of absence Monsieur has asked for," replied the lackey.

"For me! I have asked for no leave of absence."

"Hold your tongue and take it!" said D'Artagnan. "And you, my friend, there is a demi-pistole for your trouble; you will tell

M. de Tréville that M. Aramis is very much obliged to him. Go."

The lackey bowed to the ground and departed.

"What does all this mean?" asked Aramis.

"Pack up all you want for a journey of a fortnight, and follow me."

"But I cannot leave Paris, just now, without knowing——" Aramis stopped.

"The cause takes us to England."

"And what is this cause?" demanded Aramis.

"Oh, you'll know it some day, Aramis; but at present I must imitate the discretion of 'the doctor's niece'."

Aramis smiled, as he remembered the tale he had told his friends on a certain evening. "Well, then, since nothing prevents me, I am ready to follow you. You say we are going——"

"To see Athos now, and if you will come thither, I beg you to make haste, for we have lost much time already. *A propos*, inform Bazin."

"Will Bazin go with us?" asked Aramis.

"Perhaps so. At all events, it is best that he should follow us to Athos's."

Aramis called Bazin, and, after having ordered him to join them at Athos's residence, said, "Let us go, then," at the same time taking his cloak, sword, and three pistols, opening uselessly two or three drawers to see if he could not find stray coin. When well assured this search was superfluous, he followed D'Artagnan, and both soon arrived at Athos's dwelling. They found him holding his leave of absence in one hand, and M. de Tréville's note in the other.

"Can you explain to me what signify this leave of absence and this letter, which I have just received?" said the astonished Athos.

MY DEAR ATHOS,—I wish, as your health absolutely requires it, that you should rest for a fortnight. Go, then, and take the waters of Forges, or any that may be more agreeable to you, and recuperate yourself as quickly as possible.

Your affectionate

DE TRÉVILLE.

Famous Stories of High Adventure

"Well, this leave of absence and that letter mean that you must follow me, Athos."

"To the waters of Forges?"

"There or elsewhere."

"In the king's service?"

"Either the king's or the queen's. Are we not their Majesties' servants?"

At that moment Porthos entered. "*Pardieu!*" said he, "here is a strange thing! Since when, I wonder, in the Musketeers, did they grant men leave of absence without their asking for it?"

"Since," said D'Artagnan, "they have friends who ask it for them."

"Ah, ah!" said Porthos, "it appears there's something fresh here."

"Yes, we are going——" said Aramis.

"To what country?" demanded Porthos.

"My faith! I don't know much about it," said Athos. "Ask D'Artagnan."

"To London, gentlemen," said D'Artagnan.

"To London!" cried Porthos; "and what the devil are we going to do in London?"

"That is what I am not at liberty to tell you, gentlemen; you must trust to me."

"But in order to go to London," added Porthos, "money is needed, and I have none."

"Nor I," said Aramis.

"Nor I," said Athos.

"I have," replied D'Artagnan, pulling out his treasure from his pocket, and placing it on the table. "There are in this bag three hundred pistoles. Let each take seventy-five; that is enough to take us to London and back. Besides, make yourselves easy; we shall not all arrive at London."

"Why so?"

"Because, in all probability, some one of us will be left on the road."

"Is this, then, a campaign upon which we are now entering?"

"One of a most dangerous kind, I give you notice."

"Ah! but if we do risk being killed," said Porthos, "at least I should like to know what for."

"You would be all the wiser," said Athos.

"And yet," said Aramis, "I am somewhat of Porthos's opinion."

"Is the king accustomed to give you such reasons? No. He says to you jauntily, 'Gentlemen, there is fighting going on in Gascony or in Flanders; go and fight,' and you go there. Why? You need give yourselves no more uneasiness about this."

"D'Artagnan is right," said Athos; "here are our three leaves of absence which came from M. de Tréville, and here are three hundred pistoles which came from I don't know where. So let us go and get killed where we are told to go. Is life worth the trouble of so many questions? D'Artagnan, I am ready to follow you."

"And I also," said Porthos.

"And I, also," said Aramis. "And, indeed, I am not sorry to quit Paris; I had need of distraction."

"Well, you will have distractions enough, gentlemen, be assured," said D'Artagnan.

"And, now, when are we to go?" asked Athos.

"Immediately," replied D'Artagnan; "we have not a minute to lose."

"Hello! Grimaud! Planchet! Mousqueton! Bazin!" cried the four young men, calling their lackeys, "clean my boots and fetch the horses from the hotel."

Each musketeer was accustomed to leave at the general hôtel, as at a barrack, his own horse and that of his lackey. Planchet, Grimaud, Mousqueton, and Bazin set off at full speed.

"Now let us lay down the plan of campaign," said Porthos. "Where do we go first?"

"To Calais," said D'Artagnan; "that is the most direct line to London."

"Well," said Porthos, "this is my advice——"

"Speak!"

"Four men travelling together would be suspected. D'Artagnan will give each of us his instructions. I will go by the way of Boulogne to clear the way; Athos will set out two hours after, by that of Amiens; Aramis will follow us by that of Noyon; as to D'Artagnan, he will go by what route he thinks best, in

Planchet's clothes, while Planchet will follow us like D'Artagnan, in the uniform of the Guards."

"Gentlemen," said Athos, "my opinion is that it is not proper to allow lackeys to have anything to do in such an affair. A secret may, by chance, be betrayed by gentlemen; but it is almost always sold by lackeys."

"Porthos's plan appears to me to be impracticable," said D'Artagnan, "inasmuch as I am myself ignorant of what instructions I can give you. I am the bearer of a letter, that is all. I have not, and I cannot make three copies of that letter, because it is sealed. We must, then, as it appears to me, travel in company. This letter is here in this pocket," and he pointed to the pocket which contained the letter. "If I should be killed, one of you must take it, and continue the route; if he be killed, it will be another's turn, and so on—provided a single one arrives, that is all that is required."

"Bravo, D'Artagnan, your opinion is mine," cried Athos. "Besides, we must be consistent; I am going to take the waters, you will accompany me. Instead of taking the waters of Forges, I go and take sea waters; I am free to do so. If anyone wishes to stop us, I will show M. de Tréville's letter, and you will show your leaves of absence. If we are attacked, we will defend ourselves; if we are tried, we will stoutly maintain that we were only anxious to dip ourselves a certain number of times in the sea. They would have an easy bargain of four isolated men; whereas four men together make a troop. We will arm our four lackeys with pistols and musketoons; if they send an army out against us, we will give battle, and the survivor, as D'Artagnan says, will carry the letter."

"Well said," cried Aramis; "you don't often speak, Athos, but when you do speak, it is like Saint John of the Golden Mouth. I adopt Athos's plan. And you, Porthos?"

"I agree to it too," said Porthos, "if D'Artagnan approves of it. D'Artagnan, being the bearer of the letter is naturally the head of the enterprise; let him decide, and we will execute."

"Well," said D'Artagnan, "I decide that we should adopt Athos's plan, and that we set off in half an hour."

"Agreed!" shouted the three musketeers in chorus.

A Dangerous Mission

Each one, stretching out his hand to the bag, took his seventy-five pistoles, and made his preparations to set out at the time appointed.

At two o'clock in the morning, our four adventurers left Paris by the Barrière St. Denis. As long as it was dark they remained silent; in spite of themselves they submitted to the influence of the obscurity, and apprehended ambushes on every side.

With the first rays of day their tongues were loosened; with the sun gaiety revived. It was like the eve of a battle; the heart beat, the eyes laughed, and they felt that the life they were going to lose, was, after all, a good thing.

Besides, the appearance of the caravan was formidable. The black horses of the musketeers, their martial carriage, with the regimental step of these noble companions of the soldier, would have betrayed the most strict incognito. The lackeys followed, armed to the teeth.

All went well till they arrived at Chantilly, which they reached about eight o'clock in the morning. They needed breakfast, and alighted at the door of an *auberge*, recommended by a sign representing Saint Martin giving half his cloak to a poor man. They ordered the lackeys not to unsaddle the horses, and to hold themselves in readiness to set off again immediately.

They entered the common hall, and placed themselves at table. A gentleman, who had just arrived by the route of Dampmartin, was seated at the same table, and was breakfasting. He opened the conversation about rain and fine weather; the travellers replied. He drank to their good health, and the travellers returned his politeness.

But at the moment Mousqueton came to announce that the horses were ready, and they were arising from table, the stranger proposed to Porthos to drink the health of the cardinal. Porthos replied that he asked no better, if the stranger, in his turn, would drink the health of the king. The stranger cried that he acknowledged no other king but his Eminence. Porthos called him drunk, and the stranger drew his sword.

"You have committed a piece of folly," said Athos, "but it can't be helped; there is no drawing back. Kill the fellow, and rejoin us as soon as you can."

All three remounted their horses, and set out at a good pace,

while Porthos was promising his adversary to perforate him with all the thrusts known in the fencing-schools.

"There goes one!" cried Athos, at the end of five hundred paces.

"But why did that man attack Porthos, rather than any other one of us?" asked Aramis.

"Because, as Porthos was talking louder than the rest of us, he took him for the chief," said D'Artagnan.

"I always said that this cadet from Gascony was a well of wisdom," murmured Athos; and the travellers continued their route.

At Beauvais they stopped two hours, as well to breathe their horses a little, as to wait for Porthos. At the end of the two hours, as Porthos did not come, nor any news of him, they resumed their journey.

At a league from Beauvais, where the road was confined between two high banks, they fell in with eight or ten men who, taking advantage of the road being unpaved in this spot, appeared to be employed in digging holes and filling up the ruts with mud.

Aramis, not liking to soil his boots with this artificial mortar, apostrophized them rather sharply. Athos wished to restrain him, but it was too late. The labourers began to jeer the travellers, and by their insolence disturbed the equanimity even of the cool Athos, who urged on his horse against one of them.

Then each of these men retreated as far as the ditch, from which each took a concealed musket; the result was that our seven travellers were outnumbered in weapons. Aramis received a ball which passed through his shoulder, and Mousqueton another ball which lodged in the fleshy part which prolongs the lower portion of the loins. Therefore Mousqueton alone fell from his horse, not because he was severely wounded, but not being able to see the wound, he judged it to be more serious than it really was.

"It is an ambushade!" shouted D'Artagnan. "Don't waste a charge! Forward!"

Aramis, wounded as he was, seized the mane of his horse, which carried him on with the others. Mousqueton's horse rejoined them, and galloped by the side of his companions.

"That will serve us for a relay," said Athos.

"I would rather have had a hat," said D'Artagnan. "Mine was carried away by a ball. By my faith, it is very fortunate that the letter was not in it."

"They'll kill poor Porthos when he comes up," said Aramis.

"If Porthos were on his legs, he would have rejoined us by this time," said Athos. "My opinion is that on the ground the drunken man was not intoxicated."

They continued at their best speed for two hours, although the horses were so fatigued that it was to be feared they would soon refuse service.

The travellers had chosen cross-roads, in the hope that they might meet with less interruption; but at Crèvecoeur, Aramis declared he could proceed no farther. In fact, it required all the courage which he concealed beneath his elegant form and polished manners to bear him so far. He grew more pale every minute, and they were obliged to support him on his horse. They lifted him off at the door of a cabaret, left Bazin with him, who besides, in a skirmish was more embarrassing than useful, and set forward again in the hope of sleeping at Amiens.

"*Morbleu*," said Athos, as soon as they were again in motion, "reduced to two masters and Grimaud and Planchet! *Morbleu!* I won't be their dupe, I will answer for it. I will neither open my mouth nor draw my sword between this and Calais, I swear by——"

"Don't waste time in swearing," said D'Artagnan; "let us gallop, if our horses will consent."

And the travellers buried their rowels in their horses' flanks, who thus vigorously stimulated recovered their energies. They arrived at Amiens at midnight, and alighted at the *auberge* of the Golden Lily.

The host had the appearance of as honest a man as any on earth. He received the travellers with his candlestick in one hand and his cotton nightcap in the other. He wished to lodge the two travellers each in a charming chamber; but unfortunately these charming chambers were at the opposite extremities of the hotel. D'Artagnan and Athos refused them. The host replied that he had no other worthy of their Excellencies; but the travellers declared they would sleep in the common chamber,

each on a mattress which might be thrown upon the ground. The host insisted; but the travellers were firm, and he was obliged to do as they wished.

They had just prepared their beds and barricaded their door within, when someone knocked at the yard-shutter; they demanded who was there, and recognizing the voices of their lackeys, opened the shutter. It was indeed Planchet and Grimaud.

"Grimaud can take care of the horses," said Planchet. "If you are willing, gentlemen, I will sleep across your doorway, and you will then be certain that nobody can reach you."

"And on what will you sleep?" said D'Artagnan.

"Here is my bed," replied Planchet, producing a bundle of straw.

"Come, then," said D'Artagnan, "you are right. Mine host's face does not please me at all; it is too gracious."

"Nor me either," said Athos.

Planchet mounted by the window and installed himself across the doorway, while Grimaud went and shut himself up in the stable, undertaking that by five o'clock in the morning he and the four horses should be ready.

The night was quiet enough. Towards two o'clock in the morning somebody endeavoured to open the door; but as Planchet awoke in an instant and cried, "Who goes there?" somebody replied that he was mistaken and went away.

At four o'clock in the morning they heard a terrible riot in the stables. Grimaud had tried to waken the stable-boys, and the stable-boys had beaten him. When they opened the window, they saw the poor lad lying senseless, with his head split by a blow with a pitchfork.

Planchet went down into the yard, and wished to saddle the horses; but the horses were all used up. Mousqueton's horse, which had travelled for five or six hours without a rider the day before, might have been able to pursue the journey; but by an inconceivable error the veterinary surgeon, who had been sent for, as it appeared, to bleed one of the host's horses, had bled Mousqueton's.

This began to be annoying. All those successive accidents were perhaps the result of chance; but they might be the fruits

of a plot. Athos and D'Artagnan went out, while Planchet was sent to inquire if there were not three horses for sale in the neighbourhood. At the door stood two horses, fresh, strong, and fully equipped. These would just have suited them. He asked where their masters were, and was informed that they had passed the night in the inn, and were then settling their bill with the host.

Athos went down to pay the reckoning, while D'Artagnan and Planchet stood at the street-door. The host was in a lower and back room, to which Athos was requested to go.

Athos entered without the least mistrust, and took out two pistoles to pay the bill. The host was alone, seated before his desk, one of the drawers of which was partly open. He took the money which Athos offered to him, and after turning it over and over in his hands, suddenly cried out that it was bad, and that he would have him and his companions arrested as forgers.

"You blackguard!" cried Athos, going towards him. "I'll cut your ears off!"

At the same instant, four men, armed to the teeth, entered by side-doors, and rushed upon Athos.

"I am taken!" shouted Athos, with all the power of his lungs; "Go on, D'Artagnan! Spur, spur!" and he fired two pistols.

D'Artagnan and Planchet did not require twice bidding; they unfastened the two horses that were waiting at the door, leaped upon them, buried their spurs in their sides, and set off at full gallop.

"Do you know what has become of Athos?" asked D'Artagnan of Planchet, as they galloped on.

"Ah, Monsieur," said Planchet, "I saw one fall at each of his two shots, and he appeared to me, through the glass door, to be fighting with his sword with the others."

"Brave Athos!" murmured D'Artagnan, "and to think that we are compelled to leave him; maybe the same fate awaits us two paces hence. Forward, Planchet, forward! you are a brave fellow."

"As I told you, Monsieur," replied Planchet, "Picards are found out by being used. Besides, I am here in my own country, and that excites me."

And both, with free use of the spur, arrived at St. Omer without drawing bit. At St. Omer they breathed their horses with the bridles passed under their arms for fear of accident, and ate a morsel from their hands on the stones of the street, after which they departed again.

At a hundred paces from the gates of Calais, D'Artagnan's horse gave out, and could not by any means be made to get up again, the blood flowing from his eyes and his nose. There still remained Planchet's horse; but he stopped short, and could not be made to move a step.

Fortunately, as we have said, they were within a hundred paces of the city; they left their nags upon the high-road and ran towards the quay. Planchet called his master's attention to a gentleman who had just arrived with his lackey, and only preceded them by about fifty paces. They made all speed to come up to this gentleman, who appeared to be in great haste. His boots were covered with dust, and he inquired if he could not instantly cross over to England.

"Nothing would be more easy," said the captain of a vessel ready to set sail, "but this morning came an order to let no one leave without express permission from the cardinal."

"I have that permission," said the gentleman, drawing a paper from his pocket; "here it is."

"Have it examined by the governor of the port," said the ship-master, "and give me the preference."

"Where shall I find the governor?"

"At his country-house."

"And that is situated?"

"At a quarter of a league from the city. Look, you may see it from here—at the foot of that little hill, that slated roof."

"Very well," said the gentleman. And, with his lackey, he took the road to the governor's country-house.

D'Artagnan and Planchet followed the gentleman at a distance of five hundred paces. Once outside the city, D'Artagnan overtook the gentleman as he was entering a little wood.

"Monsieur," said D'Artagnan, "you appear to be in great haste?"

"No one can be more so, Monsieur."

"I am sorry for that," said D'Artagnan; "for as I am in great haste likewise, I wished to beg you to render me a service."

"What?"

"To let me sail first."

"That's impossible," said the gentleman; "I have travelled sixty leagues in forty-four hours, and by tomorrow at mid-day I must be in London."

"I have performed the same distance in forty hours, and by tomorrow at ten o'clock in the morning I must be in London."

"Very sorry, Monsieur; but I was here first, and will not sail second."

"I am sorry too, Monsieur; but I arrived second, and must sail first."

"The king's service!" said the gentleman.

"My own service!" said D'Artagnan.

"But this is a needless quarrel you seek with me, as it seems to me."

"*Parbleu!* what do you desire it to be?"

"What do you want?"

"Would you like to know?"

"Certainly."

"Well, then, I wish that order of which you are the bearer, seeing that I have not one of my own, and must have one."

"You jest, I presume."

"I never jest."

"Let me pass!"

"You shall not pass."

"My brave young man, I will blow out your brains. *Hola, Lubin!* my pistols!"

"Planchet," called out D'Artagnan, "take care of the lackey; I will manage the master."

Planchet, emboldened by the first exploit, sprang upon Lubin; and being strong and vigorous, he soon got him on the broad of his back, and placed his knee upon his breast.

"Go on with your affair, Monsieur," cried Planchet; "I have finished mine."

Seeing this, the gentleman drew his sword, and sprang upon D'Artagnan; but he had too strong an adversary. In three seconds D'Artagnan had wounded him three times, exclaiming

at each thrust. "One for Athos; one for Porthos; and one for Aramis!"

At the third hit the gentleman fell like a log. D'Artagnan believed him to be dead, or at least insensible, and went towards him for the purpose of taking the order; but the moment he extended his hand to search for it, the wounded man, who had not dropped his sword, plunged the point into his breast, crying, "One for you!"

"And one for me—the best for the last!" cried D'Artagnan, furious, nailing him to the earth with a fourth thrust through his body.

This time the gentleman closed his eyes and fainted. D'Artagnan searched his pockets, and took from one of them the order for the passage. It was in the name of the Comte de Wardes.

Then, casting a glance on the handsome young man, who was scarcely twenty-five years of age, and whom he was leaving deprived of sense and perhaps dead, he gave a sigh for that unaccountable destiny which leads men to destroy each other for the interests of people who are strangers to them, and who often do not even know that they exist. But he was soon roused from these reflections by Lubin, who uttered loud cries and screamed for help with all his might.

Planchet grasped him by the throat, and pressed as hard as he could. "Monsieur," said he, "as long as I hold him in this manner he can't cry, I'll be bound; but as soon as I let go he will howl again. I know him for a Norman, and Normans are obstinate."

In fact, tightly held as he was, Lubin endeavoured still to cry out.

"Stay!" said D'Artagnan; and taking out his handkerchief, he gagged him.

"Now," said Planchet, "let us bind him to a tree."

This being properly done, they drew the Comte de Wardes close to his servant; and as night was approaching, and as the wounded man and the bound man were at some little distance within the wood, it was evident they were likely to remain there till the next day.

"And now," said D'Artagnan, "to the governor's."

"But you are wounded, it seems," said Planchet.

"Oh, that's nothing! Let us attend to what is more pressing first, and then we will attend to my wound; besides, it does not seem very dangerous."

And they both set forward as fast as they could towards the country-house of the worthy functionary.

The Comte de Wardes was announced, and D'Artagnan was introduced.

"You have an order signed by the cardinal?" said the governor.

"Yes, Monsieur," replied D'Artagnan; "here it is."

"Ah, ah! it is quite regular and explicit," said the governor.

"Most likely," said D'Artagnan; "I am one of his most faithful servants."

"It appears that his Eminence is anxious to prevent someone from crossing to England?"

"Yes; a certain D'Artagnan, a Béarnese gentleman who left Paris in company with three of his friends, with the intention of going to London."

"Do you know him personally?" asked the governor.

"Whom?"

"This D'Artagnan."

"Perfectly well."

"Describe him to me, then."

"Nothing more easy."

And D'Artagnan gave, feature for feature, a description of the Comte de Wardes.

"Is he accompanied?"

"Yes; by a lackey named Lubin."

"We will keep a sharp lookout for them; and if we lay hands on them his Eminence may be assured they will be re-conducted to Paris under a good escort."

"And by doing so, Monsieur the Governor," said D'Artagnan, "you will deserve well of the cardinal."

"Shall you see him on your return, Monsieur Count?"

"Without a doubt."

"Tell him, I beg you, that I am his humble servant."

"I will not fail."

Delighted with this assurance, the governor countersigned the passport and delivered it to D'Artagnan. D'Artagnan lost

no time in useless compliments. He thanked the governor, bowed, and departed. Once outside, he and Planchet set off as fast as they could; and by making a long detour avoided the wood and re-entered the city by another gate.

The vessel was quite ready to sail, and the captain was waiting on the wharf. "Well?" said he, on perceiving D'Artagnan.

"Here is my pass countersigned," said the latter.

"And that other gentleman?"

"He will not go to-day," said D'Artagnan; "but be easy, I'll pay you for us two."

"In that case let us go," said the shipmaster.

"Let us go," repeated D'Artagnan.

He leaped with Planchet into the boat, and five minutes after they were on board. It was time; for they had scarcely sailed half a league, when D'Artagnan saw a flash and heard a detonation. It was the cannon which announced the closing of the port.

He had now leisure to look to his wound. Fortunately, as D'Artagnan had thought, it was not dangerous. The point of the sword had touched a rib, and glanced along the bone. Still further, his shirt had stuck to the wound, and he had lost only a few drops of blood.

D'Artagnan was worn out with fatigue. A mattress was laid upon the deck for him. He threw himself upon it, and fell asleep.

On the morrow, at break of day, they were still three or four leagues from the coast of England. The breeze had been so light all night, they had made but little progress. At ten o'clock the vessel cast anchor in the harbour of Dover, and at half-past ten D'Artagnan placed his foot on English land, crying, "Here I am at last!"

But that was not all; they must get to London. In England the post was well served. D'Artagnan and Planchet took each a post-horse, and a postillion rode before them. In a few hours they were in the capital.

D'Artagnan did not know London; he did not know a word of English; but he wrote the name of Buckingham on a piece of paper, and every one pointed out to him the way to the duke's hotel.

The duke was at Windsor hunting with the king. D'Artagnan inquired for the confidential valet of the duke, who, having accompanied him in all his voyages, spoke French perfectly well; he told him that he came from Paris on an affair of life and death, and that he must speak with his master instantly.

The confidence with which D'Artagnan spoke convinced Patrick, which was the name of this minister of the minister. He ordered two horses to be saddled, and himself went as guide to the young guardsman. As for Planchet, he had been lifted from his horse as stiff as a rush; the poor lad's strength was almost exhausted. D'Artagnan seemed iron.

On their arrival at the castle they learned that Buckingham and the king were hawking in the marshes two or three leagues away. In twenty minutes they were on the spot named. Patrick soon caught the sound of his master's voice calling his falcon.

"Whom must I announce to my Lord Duke?" asked Patrick.

"The young man who one evening sought a quarrel with him on the Pont Neuf, opposite the Samaritaine."

"A singular introduction!"

"You will find that it is as good as another."

Patrick galloped off, reached the duke, and announced to him in the terms directed that a messenger awaited him.

Buckingham at once remembered the circumstance, and suspecting that something was going on in France of which it was necessary he should be informed, he only took the time to inquire where the messenger was, and recognizing from afar the uniform of the Guards, he put his horse into a gallop, and rode straight up to D'Artagnan. Patrick discreetly kept in the background.

"No misfortune has happened to the queen?" cried Buckingham, the instant he came up, throwing all his fear and love into the question.

"I believe not; nevertheless, I believe she runs some great peril from which your Grace alone can extricate her."

"I!" cried Buckingham. "What is it? I should be too happy to be of any service to her. Speak, speak!"

"Take this letter," said D'Artagnan.

"This letter! from whom comes this letter?"

"From her Majesty, as I think."

Famous Stories of High Adventure

"From her Majesty!" said Buckingham, becoming so pale that D'Artagnan feared he would faint as he broke the seal.

"What is this rent?" said he, showing D'Artagnan a place where it had been pierced through.

"Ah," said D'Artagnan, "I did not see that; it was the sword of the Comte de Wardes which made that hole, when he gave me a good thrust in the breast."

"You are wounded?" asked Buckingham, as he opened the letter.

"Oh, nothing but a scratch," said D'Artagnan.

"Just Heaven, what have I read?" cried the duke. "Patrick, remain here, or rather join the king, wherever he may be, and tell his Majesty that I humbly beg him to excuse me, but an affair of the greatest importance recalls me to London. Come, Monsieur, come!" and both set off towards the capital at full gallop.



The Gold Train and the Hermit

CHARLES KINGSLEY

AMYAS LEIGH and his companion adventurers from Devon have crossed to the New World to fight the Dons, and after thrilling experiences and escapes in the lush land colonized by Spain start to make their way back towards the coast. But first they plan to have something to show for their trouble, so the Devon sea-dogs, with Jack Brimblecombe, ambush a Spanish gold train and rescue most of the Indian and Negro slaves. The English adventurers continue their gruelling journey over mountainous country and come upon the most unusual Spaniard in the New World. He too has a tale to tell. How the men of Devon finally get to the coast after taking their leave of the hermit, and sail home to England, is told in *Westward Ho!* from which this story is taken.

A fortnight or more has passed in severe toil; but not more severe than they have endured many a time before. Bidding farewell once and for ever to the green ocean of the eastern plains, they have crossed the Cordillera; they have taken a longing glance at the city of Santa Fé, lying in the midst of rich gardens on its lofty mountain plateau, and have seen, as was to be expected, that it was far too large a place for any attempt of theirs. But they have not altogether thrown away their time. Their Indian lad has discovered that a gold train is going down from Santa Fé toward the Magdalena; and they are waiting for it beside the miserable rut which serves for a road, encamped in a forest of oaks which would make them almost fancy themselves back again in Europe, were it not for the tree-ferns which form the undergrowth; and were it not, too, for the deep gorges opening at their very feet; in which, while their brows are swept by the cool breezes of a temperate zone, they can see far below, dim through their everlasting vapour-bath of rank hot steam, the mighty forms and gorgeous colours of the tropic forest.

They have pitched their camp among the tree-ferns, above a spot where the path winds along a steep hillside, with a sheer cliff below of many a hundred feet. There was a road there once, perhaps, when Cundinamarca was a civilised and cultivated kingdom; but all which Spanish misrule has left of it are a few steps slipping from their places at the bottom of a narrow ditch of mud.

And now, the rapid tropic vegetation has reclaimed its old domains, and Amyas and his crew are as utterly alone, within a few miles of an important Spanish settlement, as they would be in the solitudes of the Orinoco or the Amazon.

In the meanwhile, all their attempts to find sulphur and nitre have been unavailing; and they have been forced to depend upon their swords and arrows. Be it so: Drake took Nombre de Dios and the gold train there with no better weapons; and they may do as much.

So, having blocked up the road above by felling a large tree across it, they sit there among the flowers chewing coca, in default of food and drink, and meditating among themselves.

At last, up from beneath there was a sharp crack and a loud

cry. The crack was neither the snapping of a branch, nor the tapping of a woodpecker; the cry was neither the scream of the parrot, nor the howl of the monkey—

“That was a whip’s crack,” said Yeo, “and a woman’s wail. They are close here, lads!”

“A woman’s? Do they drive women in their gangs?” asked Amyas.

“Why not, the brutes? There they are, sir. Did you see their basnets glitter?”

“Men!” said Amyas in a low voice, “I trust you all not to shoot till I do. Then give them one arrow, out swords, and at them! Pass the word along.”

Up they came slowly, and all hearts beat loud at their coming.

First, about twenty soldiers, only one half of whom were on foot; the other half being borne, incredible as it may seem, each in a chair on the back of a single Indian, while those who marched had consigned their heaviest armour and their arquebuses into the hands of attendant slaves, who were each pricked on at will by the pike of the soldier behind them.

“The men are mad to let their ordnance out of their hands.”

“Oh, sir, an Indian will pray to an arquebus not to shoot him; be sure their artillery is safe enough,” said Yeo.

“Look at the proud villains,” whispered another, “to make dumb beasts of human creatures like that!”

“Ten shot,” counted the business-like Amyas, “and ten pikes; Will can tackle them up above.”

Last of this troop came some inferior officer, also in his chair, who, as he went slowly up the hill, with his face turned toward the gang which followed, drew every other second the cigar from his lips, to inspirit them with those pious ejaculations to the various objects of his worship, divine, human, anatomic, wooden, and textile, which earned for the pious Spaniards of the sixteenth century the uncharitable imputation of being at once the most fetich-ridden idolators, and the most abominable swearers, of all Europeans.

“The blasphemous dog!” said Yeo, fumbling at his bowstring, as if he longed to send an arrow through him. But Amyas had hardly laid his finger on the impatient veteran’s arm, when another procession followed, which made them forget all else.

A sad and hideous sight it was: yet one too common even then in those remoter districts, where the humane edicts were disregarded, which the prayers of Dominican friars (to their everlasting honour be it spoken) had wrung from the Spanish sovereigns; and which the legislation of that most wise, virtuous, and heroic Inquisitor (paradoxical as the words may seem), Pedro de la Gasca, had carried into effect in Peru,—futile and tardy alleviations of cruelties and miseries unexampled in the history of Christendom, or perhaps on earth, save in the conquests of Sennacherib and Geinghis-Khan. But on the frontiers, where negroes were imported to endure the toil which was found fatal to the Indian, and all Indian tribes convicted (or suspected) of cannibalism were hunted down for the salvation of their souls and the enslavement of their bodies, such scenes as these were still too common.

A line of Indians, Negroes, and Zambos, naked, emaciated, scarred with whips and fetters, and chained together by their left wrists, toiled upwards, panting and perspiring under the burden of a basket held up by a strap which passed across their foreheads. Yeo's sneer was but too just: there were not only old men and youths among them, but women; slender young girls, mothers with children running at their knee; and, at the sight, a low murmur of indignation rose from the ambushed Englishmen, worthy of the free and righteous hearts of those days, when Raleigh could appeal to man and God, on the ground of a common humanity, in behalf of the outraged heathens of the New World; when Englishmen still knew that man was man, and that the instinct of freedom was the righteous voice of God.

But the first forty, so Amyas counted, bore on their backs a burden which made all, perhaps, but him and Yeo forget even the wretches who bore it. Each basket contained a square package of carefully corded hide; the look whereof friend Amyas knew full well.

"What's in they, captain?"

"Gold!" And at that magic word all eyes were strained greedily forward, and such a rustle followed that Amyas, in the very face of detection, had to whisper—

"Be men, be men, or you will spoil all yet!"

The last twenty or so of the Indians bore larger baskets, but

more lightly freighted, seemingly with manioc, and maize-bread, and other food for the party; and after them came, with their bearers and attendants, just twenty soldiers more, followed by the officer in charge, who smiled away in his chair, and twirled two huge mustachios, thinking of nothing less than of the English arrows which were itching to be away and through his ribs. The ambush was complete; the only question how and when to begin?

Amyas had a shrinking, which all will understand, from drawing bow in cool blood on men so utterably unsuspecting and defenceless, even though in the very act of devilish cruelty—for devilish cruelty it was, as three or four drivers, armed with whips, lingered up and down the slowly-staggering file of Indians, and avenged every moment's lagging, even every stumble, by a blow of the manati-hide, which cracked like a pistol-shot against the naked limbs of the silent and uncomplaining victim.

The last but one of the chained line was an old grey-headed man, followed by a slender graceful girl of some eighteen years old, and Amyas's heart yearned over them as they came up. Just as they passed, the foremost of the file had rounded the corner above; there was a bustle, and a voice shouted, "Halt, Señors! there is a tree across the path!"

"A tree across the path?" bellowed the officer, with a variety of passionate addresses to the Mother of Heaven, the fiends of hell, Saint Jago of Compostella, and various other personages; while the line of trembling Indians, told to halt above, and driven on by blows below, surged up and down upon the ruinous steps of the Indian road, until the poor old man fell grovelling on his face.

The officer leapt down, and hurried upward to see what had happened. Of course, he came across the old man.

"*Sin peccado concebida!* Grandfather of Beelzebub, is this a place to lie worshipping your fiends?" and he pricked the prostrate wretch with the point of his sword.

The old man tried to rise: but the weight on his head was too much for him; he fell again and lay motionless.

The driver applied the manati-hide across his loins, once, twice, with fearful force; but even that specific was useless.

"*Gastado*, Señor Capitan," said he, with a shrug. "Used up. He has been failing these three months!"

"What does the intendant mean by sending me out with worn out cattle like these? Forward there!" shouted he. "Clear away the tree, Señors, and I'll soon clear the chain. Hold it up, Pedrillo!"

The driver held up the chain, which was fastened to the old man's wrist. The officer stepped back, and flourished round his head a Toledo blade, whose beauty made Amyas break the Tenth Commandment on the spot.

The man was a tall, handsome, broad-shouldered, high-bred man: and Amyas thought that he was going to display the strength of his arm, and the temper of his blade, in severing the chain at one stroke.

Even he was not prepared for the recondite fancies of a Spanish adventurer, worthy son or nephew of those first conquerors, who used to try the keenness of their swords upon the living bodies of Indians.

The blade gleamed in the air, once, twice, and fell: not on the chain, but on the wrist which it fettered. There was a shriek—a crimson flash—and the chain and its prisoner were parted indeed.

One moment more, and Amyas's arrow would have been through the throat of the murderer, who paused, regarding his workmanship with a satisfied smile; but vengeance was not to come from him.

Quick and fierce as a tiger-cat the girl sprang on the ruffian, and with the intense strength of passion, clasped him in her arms, and leaped with him from the narrow ledge into the abyss below.

There was a rush, a shout; all faces were bent over the precipice. The girl hung by her chained wrist: the officer was gone. There was a moment's awful silence; and then Amyas heard his body crashing through the tree-tops far below.

"Haul her up! Hew her in pieces! Burn the witch!" and the driver, seizing the chain, pulled at it with all his might, while all springing from their chairs, stooped over the brink.

Now was the time for Amyas! Heaven had delivered them into his hands. Swift and sure, at ten yards off, his arrow rushed through the body of the driver, and then, with a roar as of the

leaping lion, he sprang like an avenging angel into the midst of the astonished ruffians.

His first thought was for the girl. In a moment, by sheer strength, he had jerked her safely up into the road; while the Spaniards recoiled right and left, fancying him for the moment some mountain giant or supernatural foe. His hurrah undeceived them in an instant, and a cry of "English! Lutheran dogs!" arose, but arose too late. The men of Devon had followed their captain's lead: a storm of arrows left five Spaniards dead, and a dozen more wounded, and down leapt Salvation Yeo, his white hair streaming behind him, with twenty good swords more, and the work of death began.

The Spaniards fought like lions; but they had no time to fix their arquebuses on the crutches; no room, in that narrow path, to use their pikes. The English had the wall of them; and to have the wall there, was to have the foe's life at their mercy. Five desperate minutes, and not a living Spaniard stood upon those steps; and certainly no living one lay in the green abyss below. Two only, who were behind the rest, happening to be in full armour, escaped without mortal wound, and fled down the hill again.

"After them! Michael Evans and Simon Heard; and catch them, if they run a league."

The two long and lean Clovelly men, active as deer from forest training, ran two feet for the Spaniards' one; and in ten minutes returned, having done their work; while Amyas and his men hurried past the Indians, to help Cary and the party forward, where shouts and musket shots announced a sharp affray.

Their arrival settled the matter. All the Spaniards fell but three or four, who scrambled down the crannies of the cliff.

"Let not one of them escape! Slay them as Israel slew Amalek!" cried Yeo, as he bent over; and ere the wretches could reach a place of shelter, an arrow was quivering in each body, as it rolled lifeless down the rocks.

"Now then! Loose the Indians!"

They found armourers' tools on one of the dead bodies, and it was done.

"We are your friends," said Amyas. "All we ask is, that you

shall help us to carry this gold down to the Magdalena, and then you are free."

Some few of the younger grovelled at his knees, and kissed his feet, hailing him as the child of the Sun: but the most part kept a stolid indifference, and when freed from their fetters, sat quietly down where they stood, staring into vacancy. The iron had entered too deeply into their soul. They seemed past hope, enjoyment, even understanding.

But the young girl, who was last of all in the line, as soon as she was loosed, sprang to her father's body, speaking no word, lifted it in her thin arms, laid it across her knees, kissed the fallen lips, stroked the furrowed cheeks, murmured inarticulate sounds like the cooing of a woodland dove, of which none knew the meaning but she, and he who heard not, for his soul had long since fled. Suddenly the truth flashed on her; silent as ever, she drew one long heaving breath, and rose erect, the body in her arms.

Another moment, and she leapt into the abyss.

They watched her dark and slender limbs, twined closely round the old man's corpse, turn over, and over, and over, till a crash among the leaves, and a scream among the birds, told that she had reached the trees; and the green roof hid her from their view.

"Brave lass!" shouted a sailor.

"The Lord forgive her!" said Yeo. "But, your worship, we must have these rascals' ordnance."

"And their clothes too, Yeo, if we wish to get down the Magdalena unchallenged. Now listen, my masters all! We have won, by God's grace, gold enough to serve us the rest of our lives, and that without losing a single man; and may yet win more, if we be wise, and He thinks good. But oh, my friends, do not make God's gift our ruin, by faithlessness, or greediness, or any mutinous haste."

"You shall find none in us!" cried several men. "We know your worship. We can trust our general."

"Thank God!" said Amyas. "Now then, it will be no shame or sin to make the Indians carry it, saving the women, whom God forbid we should burden. But we must pass through the very heart of the Spanish settlements, and by the town of Saint

Martha itself. So the clothes and weapons of these Spaniards we must have, let it cost us what labour it may. How many lie in the road?"

"Thirteen here, and about ten up above," said Cary.

"Then there are near twenty missing. Who will volunteer to go down over cliff, and bring up the spoil of them?"

"I, and I, and I"; and a dozen stepped out, as they did always when Amyas wanted anything done; for the simple reason, that they knew that he meant to help at the doing of it himself.

"Very well, then, follow me."

There was no time to be lost, and over the cliff he scrambled. After half an hour's hard work, the weapons, clothes, and armour of the fallen Spaniards were hauled up the cliff, and distributed in bundles among the men; the rest of the corpses were thrown over the precipice, and they started again upon the road toward the Magdalena, while Yeo snorted like a war-horse who smells the battle at the delight of once more handling powder and ball.

"We can face the world now, sir! Why not go back and try Santa Fé, after all?"

But Amyas thought that enough was as good as a feast, and they held on downwards, while the slaves followed, without a sign of gratitude, but meekly obedient to their new masters, and testifying now and then, by a sign or a grunt, their surprise at not being beaten, or made to carry their captors.

As the cavalcade turned the corner of the mountain, they paused for one last look at the scene of that fearful triumph. Lines of vultures were already streaming out of infinite space, as if created suddenly for the occasion. A few hours and there would be no trace of that fierce fray but a few white bones amid untrodden beds of flowers.

They soon left the high road; and for several days held on downwards, hewing their path slowly and painfully through the thick underwood. On the evening of the fourth day, they had reached the margin of a river, at a point where it seemed broad and still enough for navigation. For those three days they had not seen a trace of human beings, and the spot seemed lonely enough for them to encamp without fear of discovery, and begin the making of their canoes. They began to spread themselves

along the stream, in search of the soft-wooded trees proper for their purpose; but hardly had their search begun, when, in the midst of a dense thicket, they came upon a sight which filled them with astonishment. Beneath a honeycombed cliff, which supported one enormous cotton-tree, was a spot of some thirty yards square sloping down to the stream, planted in rows with magnificent banana plants, full twelve feet high, and bearing among their huge waxy leaves clusters of ripening fruit; while, under their mellow shade, yams and cassava plants were flourishing luxuriantly, the whole being surrounded by a hedge of orange and scarlet flowers. There it lay, streaked with long shadows from the setting sun, while a cool southern air rustled in the cotton-tree, and flapped to and fro the great banana-leaves; a tiny paradise of art and care. But where was its inhabitant?

Aroused by the noise of their approach, a figure issued from a cave in the rocks, and after gazing at them for a moment, came down the garden towards them. He was a tall and stately old man, whose snow-white beard and hair covered his chest and shoulders, while his lower limbs were wrapped in Indian-web. Slowly and solemnly he approached, a staff in one hand, a string of beads in the other, the living likeness of some old Hebrew prophet, or anchorite of ancient legend. He bowed courteously to Amyas (who of course returned his salute), and was in act to speak, when his eye fell upon the Indians, who were laying down their burdens in a heap under the trees. His mild countenance assumed instantly an expression of the acutest sorrow and displeasure; and striking his hands together, he spoke in Spanish—

“Alas! miserable me! Alas! unhappy Señors! Do my old eyes deceive me, and is it one of those evil visions of the past which haunt my dreams by night: or has the accursed thirst of gold, the ruin of my race, penetrated even into this my solitude? Oh, Señors, Señors, know you not that you bear with you your own poison, your own familiar fiend, the root of every evil? And is it not enough for you, Señors, to load yourselves with the wedge of Achan, and partake his doom, but you must make these hapless heathens the victims of your greed and cruelty, and forestall for them on earth those torments which may await their unbaptized souls hereafter?”

"We have preserved, and not enslaved these Indians, ancient Señor," said Amyas proudly; "and to-morrow will see them as free as the birds over our heads."

"Free? Then you cannot be countrymen of mine! But pardon an old man, my son, if he has spoken too hastily in the bitterness of his own experience. But who and whence are you? And why are you bringing into this lonely wilderness that gold—for I know too well the shape of those accursed packets, which would God that I had never seen!"

"What we are, reverend sir, matters little. As for our gold, it will be a curse or a blessing to us, I conceive, just as we use it well or ill; and so is a man's head, or his hand, or any other thing; but that is no reason for cutting off his limbs for fear of doing harm with them; neither is it for throwing away those packages, which, by your leave, we shall deposit in one of these caves. We must be your neighbours, I fear, for a day or two; but I can promise you that your garden shall be respected, on condition that you do not inform any human soul of our being here."

"God forbid, Señor, that I should try to increase the number of my visitors, much less to bring hither strife and blood, of which I have seen too much already. As you have come in peace, in peace depart. Leave me alone with God and my penitence, and may the Lord have mercy on you!"

And he was about to withdraw, when, recollecting himself, he turned suddenly to Amyas again—

"Pardon me, Señor, if, after forty years of utter solitude, I shrink at first from the conversation of human beings, and forget, in the habitual shyness of a recluse, the duties of a hospitable gentleman of Spain. My garden, and all which it produces, is at your service. Only let me entreat that these poor Indians shall have their share; for heathens though they be, Christ died for them; and I cannot but cherish in my soul some secret hope that He did not die in vain."

"God forbid!" said Brimblecombe. "They are no worse than we, for aught I see, whatsoever their fathers may have been; and they have fared no worse than we since they have been with us, nor will, I promise you."

The good fellow did not tell that he had been starving himself for the last three days to cram the children with his own

rations; and that the sailors, and even Amyas, had been going out of their way every five minutes, to get fruit for their new pets.

A camp was soon formed; and that evening the old hermit asked Amyas, Cary, and Brimblecombe to come up into his cavern.

They went; and after the accustomed compliments had passed, sat down on mats upon the ground, while the old man stood, leaning against a slab of stone surmounted by a rude wooden cross, which evidently served him as a place of prayer. He seemed restless and anxious, as if he waited for them to begin the conversation; while they, in their turn, waited for him. At last, when courtesy would not allow him to be silent any longer, he began with a faltering voice—

“You may equally be surprised, Señors, at my presence in such a spot, and at my asking you to become my guests even for one evening, while I have no better hospitality to offer you.”

“It is superfluous, Señor, to offer us food in your own habitation when you have already put all that you possess at our command.”

“True, Señors: and my motive for inviting you was, perhaps, somewhat of a selfish one. I am possessed by a longing to unburthen my heart of a tale which I never yet told to man.”

The three young men, equally surprised and interested, could only entreat their host to “use their ears as those of his slaves,” on which, after fresh apologies, he began—

“Know, then, victorious cavaliers, that I, whom you now see here as a poor hermit, was formerly one of the foremost of that terrible band who went with Pizarro to the conquest of Peru. Eighty years old am I this day, unless the calendar which I have carved upon yonder tree deceives me; and twenty years old was I when I sailed with that fierce man from Panama, to do that deed with which all earth, and heaven, and hell itself, I fear, has rung. How we endured, suffered, and triumphed; how, mad with success, and glutted with blood, we turned our swords against each other, I need not tell to you. For what gentleman of Europe knows not our glory and our shame?”

His hearers bowed assent.

“Yes; you have heard of our prowess: for glorious we were a while, in the sight of God and man. But I will not speak of our glory, for it is tarnished; nor of our wealth, for it was our poison;

nor of the sins of my comrades, for they have expiated them; but of my own sins, Señors, which are more in number than the hairs of my head, and a burden too great to bear. *Miserere Domine!*”

And smiting on his breast, the old warrior went on—

“As I said, we were mad with blood; and none more mad than I. Surely it is no fable that men are possessed, even in this latter age, by devils. Why else did I rejoice in slaying? Why else was I, the son of a noble and truthful cavalier of Castile, among the foremost to urge upon my general the murder of the Inca? Why did I rejoice over his dying agonies? Why, when Don Ferdinando de Soto returned, and upbraided us with our villainy, did I, instead of confessing the sin which that noble cavalier set before us, withstand him to his face, ay, and would have drawn the sword on him, but that he refused to fight a liar, as he said that I was?”

Amyas was silent; the old gentleman continued—

“And why, again, Señors, did I after that day give myself up to cruelty as to a sport; yea, though that I did God service by destroying the creatures whom He had made; I who now dare not destroy a gnat, lest I harm a being more righteous than myself? Was I mad? If I was, how then was I all that while as prudent as I am this day? But I am not here to argue, Señors, but to confess. In a word, there was no deed of blood done for the next few years in which I had not my share, if it were but within my reach. Señors, I will not pollute your ears with what was done. But, Señors, I had a brother.”

And the old man paused a while.

“A brother—whether better or worse than me, God knows, before whom he has appeared ere now. At least he did not, as I did, end as a rebel to his king! The two brothers struck each other, Señors! Who struck first I know not; but swords were drawn, and—— The cavaliers round parted them, crying shame.”

The old man paused.

“You know, doubtless, Señors, how, after the death of old Almagro, his son’s party conspired against Pizarro. Now my brother remained faithful to his old commander; and for that very reason, if you will believe it, did I join the opposite party and gave myself up, body and soul, to do Almagro’s work. It was

enough for me, that the brother who had struck me thought a man right, for me to think that man a devil. What Almagro's work was, you know. He slew Pizarro. Murdered him, Señors, like a dog, or rather, like an old lion."

"He deserved his doom," said Amyas.

"Let God judge him, Señor, not we; and least of all of us I, who drew the first blood, and perhaps the last, that day. I, Señors, it was who treacherously stabbed Francisco de Chanes on the staircase, and so opened the door which else had foiled us all; and I—but I am speaking to men of honour, not to butchers. Suffice it that the old man died like a lion, and that we pulled him down, young as we were, like curs.

"Well, I followed Almagro's fortunes. I helped to slay Alvarado. If he was traitor to a traitor, I was traitor to a true man. Then to the war; you know how Vaca de Castro was sent from Spain to bring order and justice where was nought but chaos, and the dance of all devils. We met him on the hills of Chupas. Peter of Candia, the Venetian villain, pointed our guns false, and Almagro stabbed him to the heart. We charged with our lances man against man, horse against horse. All fights I ever fought" (and the old man's eyes flashed out the ancient fire) "were child's play to that day. Our lances shivered like reeds, and we fell on with battle-axe and mace. None asked for quarter, and none gave it; friend to friend, cousin to cousin—no, nor brother, oh God! to brother. We were the better armed: but numbers were on their side. Fat Carbajal charged our cannon like an elephant, and took them; but Holguin was shot down. I was with Almagro, and we swept all before us, inch by inch, but surely, till the night fell. Then Vaca de Castro, the licentiate, the clerk, the schoolman, the man of books, came down on us with his reserve like a whirlwind. Oh! cavaliers, did not God fight against us, when He let us, the men of iron, us, the heroes of Cuzco and Vilcacongá, be foiled by a scholar in a black gown, with a pen behind his ear? We were beaten. Some ran; some did not run, Señors; and I did not. Geronimo de Alvarado shouted to me, 'We slew Pizarro! We killed the tyrant!' and we rushed upon the conqueror's lances, to die like cavaliers. There was a gallant gentleman in front of me. His lance struck me in the crest, and bore me over my horse's croup;

but mine, Señors, struck him full in the vizor. We both went to the ground together, and the battle galloped over us.

"I know not how long I lay, for I was stunned; but after a while I lifted myself. My lance was still clenched in my hand, broken but not parted. The point of it was in my foeman's brain. I crawled to him, weary and wounded, and saw that he was a noble cavalier. He lay on his back, his arms spread wide. I knew that he was dead: but there came over me the strangest longing to see that dead man's face. Perhaps I knew him. At least I could set my foot upon it, and say, 'Vanquished as I am, there lies a foe!' I caught hold of the rivets, and tore his helmet off. The moon shone bright, Señors, as bright as she shines now—the glaring, ghastly, tell-tale moon, which shows man all the sins which he tries to hide; and by that moonlight, Señors, I beheld the dead man's face. And it was the face of my brother!

"Did you ever guess, most noble cavaliers, what Cain's curse might be like? Look on me, and know!

"I tore off my armour and fled, as Cain fled—northward ever, till I should reach a land where the name of Spaniard, yea, and the name of Christian, which the Spaniard has caused to be blasphemed from east to west, should never come. I sank fainting, and waked beneath this rock, this tree, forty-four years ago, and I have never left them since, save once to obtain seeds from Indians, who knew not that I was a Spanish Conquistador. And may God have mercy on my soul!"

The old man ceased; and his young hearers, deeply affected by his tale, sat silent for a few minutes. Then John Brimblecombe spoke—

"You are old, sir, and I am young; and perhaps it is not my place to counsel you. Moreover, sir, in spite of this strange dress of mine, I am neither more nor less than an English priest; and I suppose you will not be willing to listen to a heretic."

"I have seen Catholics, Señor, commit too many abominations even with the name of God upon their lips, to shrink from a heretic if he speak wisely and well. At least, you are a man; and, after all, my heart yearns more and more, the longer I sit among you, for the speech of beings of my own race. Say what you will, in God's name!"

"I hold, sir," said Jack modestly, "according to holy

Scripture, that whosoever repents from his heart, as God knows you seem to have done, is forgiven there and then; and though his sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow, for the sake of Him who died for all."

"Amen! Amen!" said the old man, looking lovingly at his little crucifix. "I hope and pray—His name is Love. I know it now; who better? But, sir, even if He have forgiven me, how can I forgive myself?"

What was Jack to answer? He himself knew not at first. More was wanted than the mere repetition of free pardon.

"Heretic as I am, sir, you will not believe me when I tell you, as a priest, that God accepts your penitence."

"My heart tells me so already, at moments. But how know I that it does not lie?"

"Señor," said Jack, "the best way to punish oneself for doing ill, seems to me to go and do good; and the best way to find out whether God means you well, is to find out whether He will help you to do well. If you have wronged Indians in time past see whether you cannot right them now. If you can you are safe. For the Lord will not send the devil's servants to do His work."

The old man held down his head.

"Right the Indians? Alas! What is done, is done!"

"Not altogether, Señor," said Amyas, "as long as an Indian remains alive in New Granada."

"Señor, shall I confess my weakness? A voice within me has bid me a hundred times go forth and labour for those oppressed wretches, but I dare not obey. I dare not look them in the face. I should fancy that they knew my story."

"Señor," said Amyas, "these are but the sick fancies of a noble spirit, feeding on itself in solitude. You have but to try to conquer."

"And look now," said Jack, "if you dare not go forth to help the Indians, see now how God has brought the Indians to your own door. Look upon these forty souls, whom we must leave behind, like sheep which have no shepherd. Could you not teach them to fear God and to love each other, to live like rational men, perhaps to die like Christians? They would obey you as a dog obeys his master. You might be their king, their father, yea, their pope, if you would."

"You do not speak like a Lutheran."

"I am not a Lutheran, but an Englishman: but, Protestant as I am, God knows, I had sooner see these poor souls of your creed than of none."

The talk lasted long into the night, but Amyas was up long before daybreak, felling the trees; and as he and Cary walked back to breakfast, the first thing which they saw was the old man in his garden with four or five Indian children round him, talking smilingly to them.

"The old man's heart is sound still," said Will. "No man is lost who still is fond of little children."

"Ah, Señors!" said the hermit as they came up, "you see that I have begun already to act upon your advice."

"And you have begun at the right end," quoth Amyas; "if you win the children, you win the mothers."

"And if you win the mothers," quoth Will, "the poor fathers must needs obey their wives, and follow in the wake."

The old man only sighed. "The prattle of these little ones softens my hard heart, Señors, with a new pleasure."

That day Amyas assembled the Indians, and told them that they must obey the hermit as their king, and settle there as best they could: for if they broke up and wandered away, nothing was left for them but to fall one by one into the hands of the Spaniards. They heard him with their usual melancholy and stupid acquiescence, and went and came as they were bid, like animated machines; but the negroes were of a different temper; and four or five stout fellows gave Amyas to understand that they had been warriors in their own country, and that warriors they would be still; and nothing would keep them from Spaniard-hunting. Amyas saw that the presence of these desperadoes in the new colony would both endanger the authority of the hermit, and bring the Spaniards down upon it in a few weeks; so, making a virtue of necessity, he asked them whether they would go Spaniard-hunting with him.

This was just what the bold Coromantees wished for; they grinned and shouted their delight at serving under so great a warrior, and then set to work most gallantly, getting through more in the day than any ten Indians, and indeed than any two Englishmen.



The Day of Doom

CHARLES DICKENS

IN the grim Conciergerie prison in Paris during the Reign of Terror, Charles Darnay, known to the city's Revolutionary Tribunal as Citizen Evrémonde, waits for the hour when he will be taken in a tumbril to the guillotine. He receives a visit from a man who has bribed a prison guard known as the Spy, is asked to write a letter, and then is drugged by his visitor, who takes his place. In that way the Englishman Sydney Carton proposes to make amends to those he loves—by becoming Citizen Evrémonde and giving his life in place of another man's. Even on the way to the place of execution he is able to befriend a girl who is one of fifty-one others doomed to die that same day. Why Carton makes his famous sacrifice provides most of the drama in *A Tale of Two Cities*, from which this story is taken.

The Day of Doom

In the black prison of the Conciergerie, the doomed of the day awaited their fate. They were in number as the weeks of the year. Fifty-two were to roll that afternoon on the life-tide of the city to the boundless everlasting sea. Before their cells were quit of them, new occupants were appointed.

Charles Darnay, alone in a cell, had sustained himself with no flattering delusion since he came to it from the Tribunal. In every line of the narrative he had heard, he had heard his condemnation.

Nevertheless, it was not easy, with the face of his beloved wife fresh before him, to compose his mind to what it must bear. His hold on life was strong, and it was very, very hard, to loosen; by gradual efforts and degrees unclosed a little here, it clenched the tighter there; and when he brought his strength to bear on that hand and it yielded, this was closed again. There was a hurry, too, in all his thoughts, a turbulent and heated working of his heart, that contended against resignation. If, for a moment, he did feel resigned, then his wife and child who had to live after him, seemed to protest and to make it a selfish thing.

But, all this was at first. Before long, the consideration that there was no disgrace in the fate he must meet, and that numbers went the same road wrongfully, and trod it firmly every day, sprang up to stimulate him. Next followed the thought that much of the future peace of mind enjoyable by the dear ones, depended on his quiet fortitude. So, by degrees he calmed into the better state, when he could raise his thoughts much higher, and draw comfort down.

Before it had set in dark on the night of his condemnation, he had travelled thus far on his last way. Being allowed to purchase the means of writing, and a light, he sat down to write until such time as the prison lamps should be extinguished.

When he lay down on his straw bed, he thought he had done with this world.

But, it beckoned him back in his sleep, and showed itself in shining forms. Another pause of oblivion, and he awoke in the sombre morning, unconscious where he was or what had happened, until it flashed upon his mind, "this is the day of my death!"

Thus, had he come through the hours, to the day when the

fifty-two heads were to fall. And now, while he was composed, and hoped that he could meet the end with quiet heroism, a new action began in his waking thoughts, which was very difficult to master.

He had never seen the instrument that was to terminate his life. How high it was from the ground, how many steps it had, where he would be stood, how he would be touched, whether the touching hands would be dyed red, which way his face would be turned, whether he would be the first, or might be the last: these and many similar questions, in no wise directed by his will, obtruded themselves over and over again, countless times. Neither were they connected with fear: he was conscious of no fear. Rather, they originated in a strange besetting desire to know what to do when the time came; a desire gigantically disproportionate to the few swift moments to which it referred; a wondering that was more like the wondering of some other spirit within his, than his own.

The hours went on as he walked to and fro, and the clocks struck the numbers he would never hear again. Nine gone for ever, ten gone for ever, eleven gone for ever, twelve coming on to pass away. After a hard contest with that eccentric action of thought which had last perplexed him, he had got the better of it. He walked up and down. The worst of the strife was over. He could walk up and down, free from distracting fancies.

Twelve gone for ever.

He had been apprised that the final hour was Three, and he knew he would be summoned some time earlier, inasmuch as the tumbrils jolted heavily and slowly through the streets. Therefore, he resolved to keep Two before his mind, as the hour, and so to strengthen himself in the interval that he might be able, after that time, to strengthen others.

Walking regularly to and fro with his arms folded on his breast, a very different man from the prisoner, who had walked to and fro at La Force, he heard One struck away from him, without surprise. The hour had measured like most other hours. Devoutly thankful to Heaven for his recovered self-possession, he thought, "There is but another now," and turned to walk again.

Footsteps in the stone passage outside the door. He stopped.

The Day of Doom

The key was put in the lock, and turned. Before the door was opened, or as it opened, a man said in a low voice, in English: "He has never seen me here; I have kept out of his way. Go you in alone; I wait near. Lose no time!"

The door was quickly opened and closed, and there stood before him face to face, quiet, intent upon him, with the light of a smile on his features, and a cautionary finger on his lip, Sydney Carton.

There was something so bright and remarkable in his look, that, for the first moment, the prisoner misdoubted him to be an apparition of his own imagining. But, he spoke, and it was his voice; he took the prisoner's hand, and it was his real grasp.

"Of all the people upon earth, you least expected to see me?" he said.

"I could not believe it to be you. I can scarcely believe it now. You are not"—the apprehension came suddenly into his mind—"a prisoner?"

"No. I am accidentally possessed of a power over one of the keepers here, and in virtue of it I stand before you. I come from her—your wife, dear Darnay."

The prisoner wrung his hand.

"I bring you a request from her."

"What is it?"

The prisoner turned his face partly aside.

"You have no time to ask me why I bring it, or what it means; I have no time to tell you. You must comply with it—take off those boots you wear, and draw on these of mine."

There was a chair against the wall of the cell, behind the prisoner. Carton, pressing forward, had already, with the speed of lightning, got him down into it, and stood over him, barefoot.

"Draw on these boots of mine. Put your hands to them; put your will to them. Quick!"

"Carton, there is no escaping from this place; it never can be done. You will only die with me. It is madness."

"It would be madness if I asked you to escape; but do I? When I ask you to pass out at that door, tell me it is madness and remain here. Change that cravat for this of mine, that coat for this of mine. While you do it, let me take this ribbon from your hair, and shake out your hair like this of mine!"

With wonderful quickness, and with a strength both of will and action, that appeared quite supernatural, he forced all these changes upon him. The prisoner was like a young child in his hands.

"Carton! Dear Carton! It is madness. It cannot be accomplished, it never can be done, it has been attempted, and has always failed. I implore you not to add your death to the bitterness of mine."

"Do I ask you, my dear Darnay, to pass the door? When I ask that, refuse. There are pen and ink and paper on this table. Is your hand steady enough to write?"

"It was when you came in."

"Steady it again, and write what I shall dictate. Quick, friend, quick!"

Pressing his hand to his bewildered head, Darnay sat down at the table. Carton, with his right hand in his breast, stood close beside him.

"Write exactly as I speak."

"To whom do I address it?"

"To no one." Carton still had his hand in his breast.

"Do I date it?"

"No."

The prisoner looked up, at each question. Carton, standing over him with his hand in his breast, looked down.

"'If you remember,' " said Carton, dictating, "'the words that passed between us, long ago, you will readily comprehend this when you see it. You do remember them, I know. It is not in your nature to forget them.' "

He was drawing his hand from his breast; the prisoner chancing to look up in his hurried wonder as he wrote, the hand stopped, closing upon something.

"Have you written 'forget them'?" Carton asked.

"I have. Is that a weapon in your hand?"

"No; I am not armed."

"What is it in your hand?"

"You shall know directly. Write on; there are but a few words more." He dictated again. "'I am thankful that the time has come, when I can prove them. That I do so is no subject for regret or grief.' " As he said these words with his eyes fixed on

the writer, his hand slowly and softly moved down close to the writer's face.

The pen dropped from Darnay's fingers on the table, and he looked about him vacantly.

"What vapour is that?" he asked.

"Vapour?"

"Something that crossed me?"

"I am conscious of nothing; there can be nothing here. Take up the pen and finish. Hurry, hurry!"

As if his memory were impaired, or his faculties disordered, the prisoner made an effort to rally his attention. As he looked at Carton with clouded eyes and with an altered manner of breathing, Carton—his hand again in his breast—looked steadily at him.

"Hurry, hurry!"

The prisoner bent over the paper, once more.

"'If it had been otherwise;'" Carton's hand was again watchfully and softly stealing down; "'I never should have used the longer opportunity. If it had been otherwise;'" the hand was at the prisoner's face; "'I should but have had so much the more to answer for. If it had been otherwise——'" Carton looked at the pen and saw it was trailing off into unintelligible signs.

Carton's hand moved back to his breast no more. The prisoner sprang up with a reproachful look, but Carton's hand was close and firm at his nostrils, and Carton's left arm caught him round the waist. For a few seconds he faintly struggled with the man who had come to lay down his life for him; but, within a minute or so, he was stretched insensible on the ground.

Quickly, but with hands as true to the purpose as his heart was, Carton dressed himself in the clothes the prisoner had laid aside, combed back his hair, and tied it with the ribbon the prisoner had worn. Then, he softly called, "Enter there! Come in!" and the Spy presented himself.

"You see?" said Carton, looking up, as he kneeled on one knee beside the insensible figure, putting the paper in the breast: "is your hazard very great?"

"Mr. Carton," the Spy answered, with a timid snap of his fingers, "my hazard is not *that*, in the thick of business here, if you are true to the whole of your bargain."

"Don't fear me. I will be true to the death."

"You must be, Mr. Carton, if the tale of fifty-two is to be right. Being made right by you in that dress, I shall have no fear."

"Have no fear! I shall soon be out of the way of harming you, and the rest will soon be far from here, please God! Now, get assistance and take me to the coach."

"You?" said the Spy nervously.

"Him, man, with whom I have exchanged. You go out at the gate by which you brought me in?"

"Of course."

"I was weak and faint when you brought me in, and I am fainter now you take me out. The parting interview has overpowered me. Such a thing has happened here, often, and too often. Your life is in your own hands. Quick! Call assistance!"

"You swear not to betray me?" said the trembling Spy, as he paused for a last moment.

"Man, man!" returned Carton, stamping his foot; "have I sworn by no solemn vow already, to go through with this, that you waste the precious moments now? Take him yourself to the court-yard you know of, place him yourself in the carriage."

The Spy withdrew, and Carton seated himself at the table, resting his forehead on his hands. The Spy returned immediately, with two men.

"How, then?" said one of them, contemplating the fallen figure. "So afflicted to find that his friend has drawn a prize in the lottery of Sainte Guillotine?"

"A good patriot," said the other, "could hardly have been more afflicted if the Aristocrat had drawn a blank."

They raised the unconscious figure, placed it on a litter they had brought to the door, and bent to carry it away.

The door closed, and Carton was left alone. Straining his powers of listening to the utmost, he listened for any sound that might denote suspicion or alarm. There was none. Keys turned, doors clashed, footsteps passed along distant passages: no cry was raised, or hurry made, that seemed unusual. Breathing more freely in a little while, he sat down at the table, and listened again until the clock struck Two.

The Day of Doom

Sounds that he was not afraid of, for he divined their meaning, then began to be audible. Several doors were opened in succession, and finally his own. A gaoler, with a list in his hand, looked in, merely saying, "Follow me, Evrémonde!" and he followed into a large dark room, at a distance. It was a dark winter day, and what with the shadows within, and what with the shadows without, he could but dimly discern the others who were brought there to have their arms bound. Some were standing; some seated. Some were lamenting, and in restless motion; but, these were few. The great majority were silent and still, looking fixedly at the ground.

As he stood by the wall in a dim corner, while some of the fifty-two were brought in after him, one man stopped in passing, to embrace him, as having a knowledge of him. It thrilled him with a great dread of discovery; but the man went on. A very few moments after that, a young woman, with a slight girlish form, a sweet spare face in which there was no vestige of colour, and large widely opened patient eyes, rose from the seat where he had observed her sitting, and came to speak to him.

"Citizen Evrémonde," she said, touching him with her cold hand. "I am a poor little seamstress, who was with you in La Force."

He murmured for answer: "True. I forget what you were accused of?"

"Plots. Though the just Heaven knows I am innocent of any. Is it likely? Who would think of plotting with a poor little weak creature like me?"

The forlorn smile with which she said it, so touched him, that tears started from his eyes.

"I am not afraid to die, Citizen Evrémonde, but I have done nothing. I am not unwilling to die, if the Republic which is to do so much good to us poor, will profit by my death; but I do not know how that can be, Citizen Evrémonde. Such a poor weak little creature!"

As the last thing on earth that his heart was to warm and soften to, it warmed and softened to this pitiable girl.

"I heard you were released, Citizen Evrémonde. I hoped it was true?"

"It was. But, I was again taken and condemned."

"If I may ride with you, Citizen Evrémonde, will you let me hold your hand? I am not afraid, but I am little and weak, and it will give me more courage."

As the patient eyes were lifted to his face, he saw a sudden doubt in them, and then astonishment. He pressed the work-worn, hunger-worn young fingers, and touched his lips.

"Are you dying for him?" she whispered.

"And his wife and child. Hush! Yes."

"O you will let me hold your brave hand, stranger?"

"Hush! Yes, my poor sister; to the last."

Along the Paris streets, the death-carts rumble, hollow and harsh. Six tumbrils carry the day's wine to La Guillotine. All the devouring and insatiate Monsters imagined since imagination could record itself, are fused in the one realisation, Guillotine. And yet there is not in France, with its rich variety of soil and climate, a blade, a leaf, a root, a sprig, a peppercorn, which will grow to maturity under conditions more certain than those that have produced this horror. Crush humanity out of shape once more, under similar hammers, and it will twist itself into the same tortured forms. Sow the same seed of rapacious license and oppressions over again, and it will surely yield the same fruit according to its kind.

Six tumbrils roll along the streets. Change these back again to what they were, thou powerful enchanter, Time, and they shall be seen to be the carriages of absolute monarchs, the equipages of feudal nobles, the toilettes of flaring Jezebels, the churches that are not my father's house but dens of thieves, the huts of millions of starving peasants! No; the great magician who majestically works out the appointed order of the Creator, never reverses his transformations. Changeless and hopeless, the tumbrils roll along.

As the sombre wheels of the six carts go round, they seem to plough up a long crooked furrow among the populace in the streets. Ridges of faces are thrown to this side and to that, and the ploughs go steadily onward. So used are the regular inhabitants of the houses to the spectacle, that in many windows there are no people, and in some the occupation of the hands is not so much as suspended, while the eyes survey the faces in the

tumbrils. Here and there, the inmate has visitors to see the sight; then he points his finger, with something of the complacency of a curator or authorised exponent, to this cart and to this, and seems to tell who sat here yesterday, and who there the day before.

Of the riders in the tumbrils, some observe these things, and all things on their last roadside, with an impassive stare; others, with a lingering interest in the ways of life and men. Some, seated with drooping heads, are sunk in silent despair; again, there are some so heedful of their looks that they cast upon the multitude such glances as they have seen in theatres, and in pictures. Several close their eyes, and think, or try to get their straying thoughts together. Only one, and he a miserable creature, of a crazed aspect, is so shattered and made drunk by horror, that he sings, and tries to dance. Not one of the whole number appeals by look or gesture, to the pity of the people.

There is a guard of sundry horsemen riding abreast of the tumbrils, and faces are often turned up to some of them, and they are asked some question. It would seem to be always the same question, for, it is always followed by a press of people towards the third cart. The horsemen abreast of that cart, frequently point out one man in it with their swords. The leading curiosity is, to know which is he; he stands at the back of the tumbril with his head bent down, to converse with a mere girl who sits on the side of the cart, and holds his hand. He has no curiosity or care for the scene about him, and always speaks to the girl. Here and there in the long street of St. Honoré, cries are raised against him. If they move him at all, it is only to a quiet smile, as he shakes his hair a little more loosely about his face. He cannot easily touch his face, his arms being bound.

On the steps of a church, awaiting the coming-up of the tumbrils, stands the Spy and prison-sheep. He looks into the first of them: not there. He looks into the second: not there. He already asks himself, "Has he sacrificed me?" when his face clears, as he looks into the third.

"Which is Evrémonde?" says a man behind him.

"That. At the back there."

"With his hand in the girl's?"

"Yes."

The man cries, "Down, Evrémonde! To the Guillotine all aristocrats! Down, Evrémonde!"

"Hush, hush!" the Spy entreats him, timidly.

"And why not, citizen?"

"He is going to pay the forfeit: it will be paid in five minutes more. Let him be at peace."

But the man continuing to exclaim, "Down, Evrémonde!" the face of Evrémonde is for a moment turned towards him. Evrémonde then sees the Spy, and looks attentively at him, and goes his way.

The clocks are on the stroke of three, and the furrow ploughed among the populace is turning round, to come on into the place of execution, and end. The ridges thrown to this side and to that, now crumble in and close behind the last plough as it passes on, for all are following to the Guillotine. In front of it, seated in chairs, as in a garden of public diversion, are a number of women, busily knitting.

The tumbrils begin to discharge their loads. The ministers of Sainte Guillotine are robed and ready. Crash!—A head is held up, and the knitting-women who scarcely lifted their eyes to look at it a moment ago when it could think and speak, count One.

The second tumbril empties and moves on; the third comes up. Crash!—And the knitting-women, never faltering or pausing in their work, count Two.

The supposed Evrémonde descends, and the seamstress is lifted out next after him. He has not relinquished her patient hand in getting out, but still holds it as he promised. He gently places her with her back to the crashing engine that constantly whirrs up and falls, and she looks into his face and thanks him.

"But for you, dear stranger, I should not be so composed, for I am naturally a poor little thing, faint of heart; nor should I have been able to raise my thoughts to Him who was put to death, that we might have hope and comfort here to-day. I think you were sent to me by Heaven."

"Or you to me," says Sydney Carton. "Keep your eyes upon me, dear child, and mind no other object."

"I mind nothing while I hold your hand. I shall mind nothing when I let it go, if they are rapid."

The Day of Doom

“They will be rapid. Fear not!”

The two stand in the fast-thinning throng of victims, but they speak as if they were alone. Eye to eye, voice to voice, hand to hand, heart to heart, these two children of the Universal Mother, else so wide apart and differing, have come together on the dark highway, to repair home together, and to rest in her bosom.

“Brave and generous friend, will you let me ask you one last question? I am very ignorant, and it troubles me—just a little.”

“Tell me what it is.”

“I have a cousin, an only relative and an orphan, like myself, whom I love very dearly. She is five years younger than I, and she lives in a farmer’s house in the south country. Poverty parted us, and she knows nothing of my fate—for I cannot write—and if I could, how should I tell her! It is better as it is.”

“Yes, yes, better as it is.”

“What I have been thinking as we came along, and what I am still thinking now, as I look into your kind strong face which gives me so much support, is this: If the Republic really does good to the poor, and they come to be less hungry, and in all ways to suffer less, she may live a long time: she may even live to be old.”

“What then, my gentle sister?”

“Do you think?” the uncomplaining eyes in which there is so much endurance, fill with tears, and the lips part a little more and tremble: “that it will seem long to me, while I wait for her in the better land where I trust both you and I will be mercifully sheltered?”

“It cannot be, my child; there is no Time there, and no trouble there.”

“You comfort me so much! I am so ignorant. Am I to kiss you now? Is the moment come?”

“Yes.”

She kisses his lips; he kisses hers; they solemnly bless each other. The spare hand does not tremble as he releases it; nothing worse than a sweet, bright constancy is in the patient face. She goes next before him—is gone; the knitting-women count Twenty-Two.

“I am the Resurrection and the Life, saith the Lord: he that

believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

The murmuring of many voices, the upturning of many faces, the pressing on of many footsteps in the outskirts of the crowd, so that it swells forward in a mass, like one great heave of water, all flashes away. Twenty-Three.

They said of him, about the city that night, that it was the peace fullest man's face ever beheld there. Many added that he looked sublime and prophetic.

One of the most remarkable sufferers by the same axe—a woman—had asked at the foot of the same scaffold, not long before, to be allowed to write down the thoughts that were inspiring her. If he had given any utterance to his, and they were prophetic, they would have been these:

"I see long ranks of the new oppressors who have risen on the destruction of the old perishing by this retributive instrument, before it shall cease out of its present use. I see a beautiful city and a brilliant people rising from this abyss, and, in their struggles to be truly free, in their triumphs and defeats, through long, long years to come, I see the evil of this time and of the previous time of which this is the natural birth, gradually making expiation for itself and wearing out.

"I see the lives for which I lay down my life, peaceful, useful, prosperous and happy, in that England which I shall see no more.

"I see that I hold a sanctuary in their hearts, and in the hearts of their descendants, generations hence.

"It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to than I have ever known."



Captured by Pirates

W. H. G. KINGSTON

WHEN Mark Seaworth sailed in the *Cowlitz*, captained by a Dutchman, he had no thought that his voyage would end in his capture by fierce Malay pirates. However, it was after he and his friend Fairburn had been taken captive that he heard a strange tale of a previous encounter with the Malays, and later witnessed for himself how a Dyak village was plundered. But retribution was to overtake the pirates, and the two young Englishmen lived to be rescued by a Dutch man-of-war. Their remaining adventures are described in *Mark Seaworth*, from which this story is taken.

When the chief had done questioning us, we were taken below, with a guard to watch us, though there was no possibility of our escaping. The Malay was, however, kept on deck, for the

purpose, we concluded, of being further interrogated. No further attention was paid to us, and the pirates seemed to consider that we were totally beneath their notice. Towards the evening a little boiled maize was handed us by our guards, as they were aware that without food we should soon become of no value to them. For the same reason, they gave us a little dirty water to drink; and so thirsty were we, that, foul as it was, we were grateful for it, though we remembered that it was a piece of unnecessary cruelty, as we had provisions and an abundance of water in our own boats.

My greatest consolation was in the society of Fairburn, for we were allowed to sit down on the deck close together, and to converse without interruption—not that at first we could bring ourselves to talk much, for our spirits were too depressed at our change of fortune. The rest of the crew were in still worse spirits, and sat brooding over their fate in total silence.

“Well, Fairburn,” I at last exclaimed, with a sigh, “our prospects seem bad enough now, at all events.”

“Oh, they might have been worse,” he answered, smiling in spite of our situation. “You know the gentlemen might have cut our throats, or made us walk the plank, or stripped us of our clothes, or lashed us to different parts of the vessel apart from each other; or they might have amused themselves by beating us, or we might have been sent to work at the oars. Then, perhaps, our Malay is persuading the chief that he will make more of us by ransoming us, and, as we are still alive, we may find a chance of escaping. Oh, depend upon it, things might be much worse than they are; and we should be grateful.”

“I like your philosophy; but it is difficult to follow,” I observed.

“No, not at all,” he replied. “Only get accustomed to believe that everything is ordered for the best, and you will find it very easy. We cannot tell what misfortunes we may have escaped by the adventure which has befallen us. We should always compare our present state with what it might have been under still more adverse circumstances, not with what we wish it to have been.”

“Then you mean to say, that if we had remained in the boats,

some greater misfortune might have happened to us?" said I.

"Exactly so," he answered. "The boats might have sprung leaks, and have gone down, or might have run on some coral bank in the night, and have been lost; or a storm might have arisen and overwhelmed them, or some other casualties might have occurred. My firm belief is that God is everywhere. He orders everything for the best."

"True, true; I was almost forgetting this," I exclaimed. "Thanks, Fairburn, for reminding me."

While we had been speaking I had observed a young Malay lad pass constantly, and put his head in to look at us. There appeared to be a look of peculiar intelligence on his countenance, and as if he wished to draw our attention to himself. When he came again, I pointed him out to Fairburn, whose back had been towards him. He looked at him attentively. The lad, however, did not attempt to speak; and when he saw that no one was observing him, he put his finger to his lips, the universal sign all over the world of imposing silence.

"What can he mean?" I asked of Fairburn, when the lad had again disappeared.

"I think I recollect his features—I must have met him somewhere," he said. "Oh! now I know. He must be a lad whose life I once saved from a party of savages on the coast of New Guinea. He belonged to a small trading vessel from Ceram, or one of the neighbouring islands, which are accustomed to visit that coast to barter firearms, calico, and iron-work, for slaves, nutmegs, trepang, tortoiseshell, and edible birds' nests. She had been driven out of her course by a gale, and found herself on a part of the coast with which no one on board was acquainted. Before she could make good her retreat, she was perceived by some of the inhabitants. The inhabitants of New Guinea are called Papuans, and are composed of two races—the hill and the coast Papuans; the latter being very fierce and barbarous, and keeping the former in subjection. The people of whom I am now particularly speaking are said to be cannibals. They possess a number of small vessels, which they send out on piratical excursions to a very considerable distance from their homes. Their mode of warfare is rude in the extreme; their weapons consisting only of bows, arrows, and

spears. They are said to devour the prisoners they make during these excursions. They may do so sometimes; but I think it more probable that they preserve their lives to sell them as slaves. Well, as soon as the strange prahu was seen, a number of these war-boats put out of the harbour, the entrance of which was concealed by trees, and, before she could escape, surrounded her. The Malays fought bravely, but they were not prepared for war, and after several of their number were killed they were overpowered.

"I, at that time, was serving on board a whaler, which had put into a bay near where this took place. I was away in one of the boats, when, rounding a point, I saw what was going forward. The Papuans, having rifled the vessel, and taken all the people out of her, set her on fire, and were making the best of their way to the shore. Having heard of the barbarities they practise, and my boat's crew being well armed, and having a gun in the bows of the boat, I determined to rescue some of the victims. My men gave way with a will, and we dashed after the pirates. They had had experience of the effects of our firearms; and when they saw us in chase they suspected our intentions, and did their utmost to reach the shore. All escaped except two. We sent a shot through the bows of the first, and the people on board, finding her sinking, leaped into the water, and endeavoured to escape by swimming; the other we ran alongside. The crew fought very bravely. We saw three prisoners among them. Before we could prevent them, they cut the throats of two of the unhappy men. One of their chiefs was going to treat the third, a young lad, in the same way, when I shot the rascal dead. The rest of the people then jumped overboard and swam on shore.

"If there were any prisoners on board the vessel which sunk, they must have gone down in her, for we could find none, and they would certainly have swam towards us had their hands been free. It afterwards struck me that I had no right to interfere as I did. I certainly caused a great loss of life, and the preservation of the lad was the only result. However, I had no time for consideration, and could not help it; indeed, I should probably act exactly in the same way if I was placed in a similar situation again. The lad was very grateful, and became

very much attached to me. I took him on board the whaler, and he very soon got into our ways; but as we were bound to the southward, I was afraid the cold would kill him, accustomed as he was to a torrid zone, so put him on board a vessel we fell in with sailing for Borneo, to which country I understood he belonged. I managed to explain to him, with some difficulty, my reasons for parting with him. When he comprehended them, he appeared very grateful, and shed many tears as he went over the side. I certainly never expected to see him again."

"If, as I think, you did rightly, by attempting to save the lives of some fellow-creatures from the hands of cannibals, you see you are likely to benefit by the deed; for I have no doubt that this young lad will do his best to be of service to us. He tries to show us his good wishes," I said.

"I am sure he will. I know that I intended to do right when I saved his life," remarked Fairburn.

Night came on, and we began to suffer from the pangs of hunger, but more especially from thirst, and our barbarous captors turned a deaf ear to all our petitions for a little water. At last, hopeless of relief, we stretched ourselves on the deck, in the expectation of recruiting our strength by sleep. We, at all events, were better off than the slaves in the hold of a slave-vessel, for they have not room to stretch their legs, or to rest their weary backs. I had managed to fall asleep, when I was awoken by a voice saying, "Eh; glad me to see massa. Want drink?" I guessed it was that of Hassan, the young Malay. I awoke Fairburn, who sat up. The lad took his hand, and kissed it over and over again, but was afraid of speaking. He then showed us that he had brought us a jug of water, that we afterwards found he had taken from our own stock in the boat. He also brought a pannikin to drink from. We passed it round to our companions, and when we had exhausted our supply, he took away the jar with the same caution and silence as before. Here, against all probability, was a friend who might be useful to us now, and ultimately might serve us greatly.

Somewhere towards the evening of the next day we found, by the noises around us, that we were in the middle of the fleet, which had formed one compact mass. Gongs were struck as signals, arms were clashed, and the chiefs were continually

calling to each other, as if holding consultation as to some important proceeding. Some time after dark, we could feel, from the perfect calmness, and the want of that heaving motion which is nearly always experienced at sea, that we had entered a deep bay, or a gulf, or the mouth of some large river. We glided noiselessly on for some time, the only sound heard being that of the oars as they dipped into the water, till the anchors were let go, and the vessels remained stationary.

I asked Fairburn what he thought of the proceedings of our captors.

"I think, from the silent way in which they go on, that they must be on one of their kidnapping expeditions," he answered. "At first I thought they were approaching their homes, and they might be Bornean pirates from the west coast; but I have now no doubt that they are Illanons from Sooloo. They more nearly answer the descriptions I have had of the latter; but, as you know, my cruising has been more to the south and to the eastward, so that I have not fallen in with them."

All night long we lay in perfect silence. I contrived to get my head out a little way from under the platform, at the risk of a blow from a kriss; but I wanted fresh air, and to see what sort of a place we had brought up at. Of fresh air I got but little, though I discovered that we were in a small bay, closely surrounded by lofty trees, which completely concealed us, except from anyone passing directly in front of it. We were evidently in ambush for some purpose or other, probably for the object at which Fairburn surmised.

We were visited during the night by young Hassan. He brought us water and food. Fairburn tried to learn from him where we were, and what was going to happen; but, putting his finger to his mouth, he intimated that he was afraid of speaking, and hurried off. We remained, unable to sleep, in anxious expectation of daylight. At early dawn every one was astir, though cautious as before of making any noise. The anchors were got up, and the warps which had secured the vessels to the trees were cast off, and we glided out of the bay.

The pirates were so engaged in the work they were about, that they did not watch us as narrowly as before, and we were, therefore, able to creep out from under the platform, and, by

climbing up the stanchions, to look about us. We were pulling up a broad stream, bounded on either side by dark forests, the trees of which grew down to the very edge, their boughs overhanging the stream, while their shadows were reflected with peculiar distinctness in it. Behind arose ranges of lofty mountains, whose summits were lost in the gloom of that early hour. The trees were alive with monkeys and squirrels; and birds of gaudy plumage flitted about in every direction on the wing, apparently to take a look at the strangers. Alligators were enjoying their morning swim, and, disturbed by our approach, they plunged under the water to escape from our keels. Here and there in the forest were open patches, where ruined huts showed that villages had been once destroyed by some incursion like the present, or by the attacks of hostile tribes of the Dyaks, eager to fill their head-houses with the heads of the conquered.

At last, rounding a point, we came suddenly on a large Dyak village. Treachery had been at work. The boom which should have been across the river to prevent surprise, was not secured, and was easily driven aside and passed. Just at that moment the rays of the rising sun first struck the topmost peaks of the surrounding mountains, casting on them a pink hue, and making the scene below appear of a yet darker tinge. The town consisted of some thirty or more large houses raised on piles, and each capable of holding several families, perhaps altogether amounting to two hundred people. On either side of the town, on slight eminences, were two forts surrounded by a strong stockade—the upper part surmounted by a sort of *chevaux de frise* of split bamboos. The whole town was also surrounded by a stockade. On the walls of the fort were several lelaks, or brass swivel guns, of native manufacture. Outside the stockade were groves of cocoa-nut trees, and patches of open ground for the cultivation of rice, yams, and sago. The inhabitants were still apparently buried in profound repose, unsuspecting of coming evil. No one was stirring—not a sound was heard.

We dashed on at a rapid rate; and I had scarce time to observe the scene I have described. The Malays ran the sharp bows of their shallow prahus on to the shore—the triangle masts were instantly lowered, and formed bridges on to the

banks, and, in some places, to the very walls of the forts. Before the alarm was given they were swarming with savage warriors, who, kriss and assegai in hand, rushed into the town, and clambered into the forts and houses. Those who resisted were slaughtered without mercy—the young people and children were bound with cords, and were given over to a band who followed the warriors on purpose to take charge of the prisoners. When they had secured as many prisoners as their vessels could carry, they no longer gave quarter to any they met, but wantonly destroyed them. The remainder of the inhabitants escaped to the woods, where the Malays could not follow them.

While the battle was raging at its height, the attention of the Malays on board was so completely drawn from us, that it struck me we might be able to make our way along the mast on to the shore, and then concealing ourselves in the woods, wait till the expedition had sailed. I thought that we might then get away to Singapore in a Dyak vessel, or a Chinese trader, many of which I had heard visited the coast. Fairburn, however, was of opinion that the attempt would be worse than futile. In the first place, we would be inevitably seen by the Malays, and should be very likely fired at and killed; or, if brought back alive, treated with far greater harshness than before. The Dyaks too, he pointed out, were worse savages than the Malays; and, irritated by their defeat, they would not stop to consider whether we were the cause of it, but for the sake of our heads alone, would murder us without compunction. All hope, therefore, of escape was for the present abandoned.

The pirates then set fire to the houses, which, being built of bamboo, and thatched with palm leaves, burnt like tinder. Having accomplished their work of destruction to their entire satisfaction, with little loss to themselves, they shoved their prahus into the stream, and proceeded as fast as they could towards the sea. The captives, on being brought on board, were placed close to us, very much to our additional inconvenience.

Reaching the mouth of the river without interruption, we stood out to sea.

An ominous silence pervaded the ocean; so calm lay the

vessels that neither the bulkheads nor masts were heard to creak. The heat grew, if possible, still more oppressive. Then came a sudden and slow upheaving of the deep, followed quickly by a loud rushing noise. A mass of boiling froth flew sweeping over the hitherto tranquil sea. The vessels, as it struck their broadsides, heeled over to it; some righted as they were turned by the oars, and flew before it; several, we had reason to believe, went over to rise no more.

Every moment the sea got up higher, and the wind blew more furiously. Onward we flew, the oars now perfectly useless, the men at the rudders scarcely able to move them so as to guide the course of the vessel. Where we went we could not tell. Clouds chased each other over the hitherto serene sky, and a thick driving rain, a complete cataract of water, descended, shrouding the coast from our sight. The seas leaped to a terrific height in our wake, and following us, almost dashed over our stern; but the tightly built vessel rose over them, and onward again we went uninjured. The tempest had raged for three or four hours, and showed no signs of abating. We climbed up, as we had done before, to look out. The whole sea was a mass of tossing waves and foam, and far as the eye could pierce through the gloom, not another prahu was in sight. The tempest had scattered far and wide the barks of the fierce warriors, as the summer breeze would the light chaff. The working of the vessel, as she was tossed up and down by the waves, caused her to leak most alarmingly, and all hands were set to work to bale her out. In this we of course very willingly joined, for our own lives depended on her being kept afloat; and it besides enabled us to stretch our limbs and look about us. Everything capable of holding water was made use of, and the calabashes, kettles, buckets, and pans were passed along from hand to hand from the hold to the side of the vessel and back again with the greatest rapidity. We kept the water under, but that was all; and it seemed most questionable whether we should be able in this condition to get back to Sooloo.

In this condition the night overtook us. Whether we should keep afloat till daylight, none of us could say. Daylight found us still labouring. The pirates looked out anxiously to discover some of their consorts. Two were in sight in the far distance;

but they beheld another spectacle, which filled them with alarm, while it made our hearts bound with hope. It was a square-rigged vessel, her top-sails just visible above the horizon; and from the squareness of her yards, and the whiteness of her canvas, we trusted that she was a man-of-war. The Illanons, who are well accustomed to discern the various classes of vessels, and to know their armaments, that they may avoid catching a Tartar, were of our opinion. The stranger was to windward, so that they would have had but small chance of escaping, even by attempting to pull up in that direction. By keeping before the wind, when their oars would less avail them, their chance of escape was still smaller.

The brig came up very rapidly with the other prahus; and, as soon as she got near enough, she opened her fire on them,—a foretaste of what we were to expect, for pirates deserve no mercy, and they were not likely to receive any at her hands. They were brave, or at all events desperate men, and returned her fire with their big stem gun and lelahs, though the latter were not likely to do much harm. Her guns were well and rapidly worked. The foremost mast of one of the prahus was shot away, and the other fared still worse. Several shots seemed to have struck her; still she held on. We saw her rise to the top of a wave, then down she glided into the trough of the sea. We looked for her in vain. It was her last plunge; and with her crew of savage warriors and hapless slaves, she sunk to rise no more. The brig did not heave-to in order to save any of the wretches, but ran close to the vessel she had crippled. Before she ran alongside, she opened her entire broadside on the pirate, so as still more effectually to prevent her escaping. The chiefs fought fiercely, like men who know that their fate is sealed, and are determined to sell their lives dearly. They discharged their lelahs in quick succession; they kept up to the last a hot fire from their long gun, and sent showers of arrows from their bows. When they got to still closer quarters their spears came into play; and as the Europeans leaped down on their decks to take possession, many were severely wounded by their spears and krisses thrust through the bamboo planking. Then, when the Malays saw that they could do no further injury to their conquerors, they fired their vessel in several

places, in the hopes of destroying them at the same time with themselves.

The Dutchmen were brave fellows, and in spite of the risk they ran, they managed to save some of those they found on board, before they cast loose from the burning prahu. The brig then made sail after us.

I will not acknowledge exactly to have felt fear; but I experienced a very disagreeable sensation as the shot of our friends came flying around us, and some of the equally unfortunate Dyaks, and one or two Malays, were struck down close to us. The feeling would have been still worse, had we not been so eagerly engaged in watching the brig, with the expectation of being released, and hoping to escape unhurt. At last a shot struck the head of our mainmast, and down came the sail; the foremast very soon followed, the afterpart being struck, and with the sail it swung over the bows. As the musketry of the Dutchmen came rattling among us, they sent forth the most frightful shrieks and yells in return, gnashing their teeth, and clashing their weapons together, as they waited to meet their assailants hand to hand. The Dutch captain, knowing that there were prisoners on board, instead of firing away at a distance till the prahus sunk, as, from the character of the Malays, he would have been justified in doing, ran alongside, shouting out that he would afford quarter to those who sought it. The fierce Malays answered him with loud cries of derision and shrieks of despair, and continued discharging their weapons with greater fury than before.

We now discovered that what we at first thought a great misfortune, namely, the leaky condition of the vessel, was in reality the means of preserving our lives. Had it not been for that, we should have remained bound and helpless; but in order to allow us to work at baling out, the pirates had set us free.

But a fresh enemy was now assailing the devoted vessel of the pirates. No one attending to baling her out, the water was gaining rapidly on her, its ingress being expedited by the shot-holes lately made. Loaded as she was with booty, with living men and dead bodies, as the water rose she sunk lower and lower. The bow of the prahu swung for a few seconds towards

that of the brig, the mast becoming entangled in the fore chain-plates; we seized the opportunity, and crying out in Dutch and English that we were friends, which indeed our dress showed, we ran along it, and leaped into the fore-chains.

A few pistols were fired and pikes thrust at us before the seamen discovered that we were not pirates; and a wounded Malay thrust his pike into the back of one poor fellow as he was about to spring forward. A few of the Dyaks followed our example, and we endeavoured to preserve their lives; but no sooner did the Malays perceive what had happened than they attempted to reach the brig in the same way. With terrific shrieks they rushed on; but they were too late—the sea had already reached the deck of the prahu. The Dutchmen cut off the grapnels; and, with a sudden lurch, down she went, carrying with her the still shrieking and threatening warriors. I shall never forget the dreadful expression of countenance of those almost demon-like beings, as, brandishing their arms with furious gesticulations, their feet still clinging to the platform on which they so often had fought and conquered in many an action, the water closed over their heads. How great was the contrast which a few short minutes had wrought! But lately we were surrounded by them, and had every prospect of sharing their fate, and now we were among civilized men eager to succour us. Truly we had to thank Heaven who had so mercifully preserved us.

As I lay that night in a hammock, slung in the cabin of the kind Dutch officer who commanded the brig, I heard a voice whisper softly in my ear—"God is great—God is everywhere."



Theseus and the Minotaur

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

WHEN Theseus, the young Athenian prince, heard from his ailing father King Ægeus of the yearly tribute of human sacrifice demanded by the unrelenting King Minos of Crete, he was determined to become either another victim or victor over the terrible Minotaur. So he sailed from Athens with the other young men and women who were to be the Minotaur's prey, and landed on the dreaded island. But he found a secret ally in the lovely Ariadne, tender-hearted daughter of a cruel father, and with her encouragement and help discovered a way to defeat the Minotaur and to free Athens from any further payment of the grim tribute to King Minos. This is one of the many old Greek myths and legends recounted by the author in *Tanglewood Tales*.

"Alas! my son," quoth King Ægeus, heaving a long sigh, "here

is a very lamentable matter in hand! This is the woefulest anniversary in the whole year. It is the day when we annually draw lots to see which of the youths and maids of Athens shall go to be devoured by the horrible Minotaur!"

"The Minotaur!" exclaimed Prince Theseus; and like a brave young prince as he was, he put his hand to the hilt of his sword. "What kind of a monster may that be? Is it not possible, at the risk of one's life, to slay him?"

But King Ægeus shook his venerable head, and to convince Theseus that it was quite a hopeless case, he gave him an explanation of the whole affair. It seems that in the island of Crete there lived a certain dreadful monster, called a Minotaur, which was shaped partly like a man and partly like a bull, and was altogether such a hideous sort of a creature that it is really disagreeable to think of him. If he were suffered to exist at all, it should have been on some desert island, or in the duskiness of some deep cavern, where nobody would ever be tormented by his abominable aspect. But King Minos, who reigned over Crete, laid out a vast deal of money in building a habitation for the Minotaur, and took great care of his health and comfort, merely for mischief's sake. A few years before this time, there had been a war between the city of Athens and the island of Crete, in which the Athenians were beaten, and compelled to beg for peace. No peace could they obtain, however, except on condition that they should send seven young men and seven maidens, every year, to be devoured by the pet monster of the cruel King Minos. For three years past, this grievous calamity had been borne. And the sobs, and groans, and shrieks with which the city was now filled, were caused by the people's woe, because the fatal day had come again, when the fourteen victims were to be chosen by lot.

But when Theseus heard the story, he straightened himself up, so that he seemed taller than ever before; and as for his face, it was indignant, spiteful, bold, tender, and compassionate, all in one look.

"Let the people of Athens this year draw lots for only six young men, instead of seven," said he, "I will myself be the seventh; and let the Minotaur devour me if he can!"

"Oh, my dear son," cried King Ægeus, "why should you

expose yourself to this horrible fate? You are a royal prince, and have a right to hold yourself above the destinies of common men."

"It is because I am a prince, your son, and the rightful heir of your kingdom, that I freely take upon me the calamity of your subjects," answered Theseus.

The old king shed tears, and besought Theseus not to leave him desolate in his old age, more especially as he had but just begun to know the happiness of possessing a good and valiant son. Theseus, however, felt that he was in the right, and therefore would not give up his resolution. But he assured his father that he did not intend to be eaten up, unresistingly, like a sheep, and that, if the Minotaur devoured him, it should not be without a battle for his dinner. And finally, since he could not help it, King Ægeus consented to let him go. So a vessel was got ready, and rigged with black sails; and Theseus, with six other young men, and seven tender and beautiful damsels, came down to the harbour to embark.

Then, going on board, the mariners trimmed the vessel's sails to the wind, which blew faintly off the shore, being pretty much made up of the sighs that everybody kept pouring forth on this melancholy occasion. But by-and-by, when they had got fairly out to sea, there came a stiff breeze from the north-west, and drove them along as merrily over the white-capped waves as if they had been going on the most delightful errand imaginable. And though it was a sad business enough, I rather question whether fourteen young people, without any old persons to keep them in order, could continue to spend the whole time of the voyage in being miserable. There had been some few dances upon the undulating deck, I suspect, and some hearty bursts of laughter, and other such unseasonable merriment among the victims, before the high blue mountains of Crete began to show themselves among the far-off clouds. That sight, to be sure, made them all very grave again.

Theseus stood among the sailors, gazing eagerly towards the land; although, as yet, it seemed hardly more substantial than the clouds, amidst which the mountains were looming up. Once or twice, he fancied that he saw a glare of some bright object, a long way off, flinging a gleam across the waves.

"Did you see that flash of light?" he inquired of the master of the vessel.

"No, prince; but I have seen it before," answered the master. "It came from Talus, I suppose."

As the breeze came fresher just then, the master was busy with trimming his sails, and had no more time to answer questions. But while the vessel flew faster and faster towards Crete, Theseus was astonished to behold a human figure, gigantic in size, which appeared to be striding, with a measured movement, along the margin of the island. It stepped from cliff to cliff, and sometimes from one headland to another, while the sea foamed and thundered on the shore beneath, and dashed its jet of spray over the giant's feet. What was still more remarkable, whenever the sun shone on this huge figure, it flickered and glimmered; its vast countenance, too, had a metallic lustre, and threw great flashes of splendour through the air. The folds of its garments, moreover, instead of waving in the wind, fell heavily over its limbs, as if woven of some kind of metal.

The nigher the vessel came, the more Theseus wondered what this immense giant could be, and whether it actually had life or no. For, though it walked, and made other lifelike motions, there yet was a kind of jerk in its gait, which, together with its brazen aspect, caused the young prince to suspect that it was no true giant, but only a wonderful piece of machinery. The figure looked all the more terrible because it carried an enormous brass club on its shoulder.

"What is this wonder?" Theseus asked of the master of the vessel, who was now at leisure to answer him.

"It is Talus, the Man of Brass," said the master.

"And is he a live giant, or a brazen image?" asked Theseus.

"That, truly," replied the master, "is the point which has always perplexed me. Some say, indeed, that this Talus was hammered out for King Minos by Vulcan himself, the skilfullest of all workers in metal. But who ever saw a brazen image that had sense enough to walk round an island three times a day, as this giant walks round the island of Crete, challenging every vessel that comes nigh the shore? And, on the other hand, what living thing, unless his sinews were made of brass, would not be weary of marching eighteen hundred miles in the twenty-four

hours, as Talus does, without ever sitting down to rest. He is a puzzler, take him how you will."

Still the vessel went bounding onward; and now Theseus could hear the brazen clangour of the giant's footsteps, as he trod heavily upon the sea-beaten rocks, some of which were seen to crack and crumble into the foaming waves beneath his weight. As they approached the entrance of the port, the giant straddled clear across it, with a foot firmly planted on each headland, and uplifting his club to such a height that its butt-end was hidden in the cloud, he stood in that formidable posture, with the sun gleaming all over his metallic surface. There seemed nothing else to be expected but that, the next moment, he would fetch his great club down, slam bang, and smash the vessel into a thousand pieces, without heeding how many innocent people he might destroy; for there is seldom any mercy in a giant, you know, and quite as little in a piece of brass clockwork. But just when Theseus and his companions thought the blow was coming, the brazen lips unclosed themselves, and the figure spoke.

"Whence come you, strangers?"

And when the ringing voice ceased, there was just such a reverberation as you may have heard within a great church bell, for a moment or two after the stroke of the hammer.

"From Athens!" shouted the master in reply.

"On what errand?" thundered the Man of Brass.

And he whirled his club aloft more threateningly than ever, as if he were about to smite them with a thunderstroke right amidships, because Athens, so little while ago, had been at war with Crete.

"We bring the seven youths and the seven maidens," answered the master, "to be devoured by the Minotaur!"

"Pass!" cried the brazen giant.

That one loud word rolled all about the sky, while again there was a booming reverberation within the figure's breast. The vessel glided between the headlands of the port, and the giant resumed his march. In a few moments, this wondrous sentinel was far away, flashing in the distant sunshine, and revolving with immense strides round the island of Crete, as it was his never-ceasing task to do.

No sooner had they entered the harbour than a party of the guards of King Minos came down to the water side, and took charge of the fourteen young men and damsels. Surrounded by these armed warriors, Prince Theseus and his companions were led to the king's palace, and ushered into his presence. Now, Minos was a stern and pitiless king. If the figure that guarded Crete was made of brass, then the monarch, who ruled over it, might be thought to have a still harder metal in his breast, and might have been called a man of iron. He bent his shaggy brows upon the poor Athenian victims. Any other mortal, beholding their fresh and tender beauty, and their innocent looks, would have felt himself sitting on thorns until he had made every soul of them happy, by bidding them go free as the summer wind. But this immitigable Minos cared only to examine whether they were plump enough to satisfy the Minotaur's appetite. For my part, I wish he himself had been the only victim; and the monster would have found him a pretty tough one.

One after another, King Minos called these pale, frightened youths and sobbing maidens to his footstool, gave them each a poke in the ribs with his sceptre (to try whether they were in good flesh or no), and dismissed them with a nod to his guards. But when his eyes rested on Theseus, the king looked at him more attentively, because his face was calm and brave.

"Young man," asked he, with his stern voice, "are you not appalled at the certainty of being devoured by this terrible Minotaur?"

"I have offered my life in a good cause," answered Theseus, "and therefore I give it freely and gladly. But thou, King Minos, art thou not thyself appalled, who, year after year, hast perpetrated this dreadful wrong, by giving seven innocent youths and as many maidens to be devoured by a monster? Dost thou not tremble, wicked king, to turn thine eyes inward on thine own heart? Sitting there on thy golden throne, and in thy robes of majesty, I tell thee to thy face, King Minos, thou art a more hideous monster than the Minotaur himself!"

"Aha! do you think me so?" cried the king, laughing in his cruel way. "To-morrow, at breakfast time, you shall have an opportunity of judging which is the greater monster, the

Minotaur or the king! Take them away, guards; and let this free-spoken youth be the Minotaur's first morsel."

Near the king's throne stood his daughter Ariadne. She was a beautiful and tender-hearted maiden, and looked at these poor doomed captives with very different feelings from those of the iron-breasted King Minos. She really wept indeed, at the idea of how much human happiness would be needlessly thrown away, by giving so many young people, in the first bloom and rose blossom of their lives, to be eaten up by a creature who, no doubt, would have preferred a fat ox, or even a large pig, to the plumpest of them. And when she beheld the brave, spirited figure of Prince Theseus, bearing himself so calmly in his terrible peril, she grew a hundred times more pitiful than before. As the guards were taking him away, she flung herself at the king's feet, and besought him to set all the captives free, and especially this one young man.

"Peace, foolish girl!" answered King Minos. "What hast thou to do with an affair like this? It is a matter of state policy, and therefore quite beyond thy weak comprehension. Go water thy flowers, and think no more of these Athenian caitiffs, whom the Minotaur shall as certainly eat up for breakfast as I will eat a partridge for supper."

So saying, the king looked cruel enough to devour Theseus and all the rest of the captives, himself, had there been no Minotaur to save him the trouble. As he would hear not another word in their favour, the prisoners were now led away, and clapped into a dungeon, where the jailer advised them to go to sleep as soon as possible, because the Minotaur was in the habit of calling for breakfast early. The seven maidens and six of the young men soon sobbed themselves to slumber. But Theseus was not like them. He felt conscious that he was wiser, and braver, and stronger than his companions, and that therefore he had the responsibility of all their lives upon him, and must consider whether there was no way to save them, even in this last extremity. So he kept himself awake, and paced to and fro across the gloomy dungeon in which they were shut up.

Just before midnight, the door was softly unbarred and the gentle Ariadne showed herself, with a torch in her hand.

"Are you awake, Prince Theseus?" she whispered.

"Yes," answered Theseus. "With so little time to live, I do not choose to waste any of it in sleep."

"Then follow me," said Ariadne, "and tread softly."

What had become of the jailer and the guards, Theseus never knew. But, however that might be, Ariadne opened all the doors, and led him forth from the darksome prison into the pleasant moonlight.

"Theseus," said the maiden, "you can now get on board your vessel, and sail away for Athens."

"No," answered the young man; "I will never leave Crete unless I can first slay the Minotaur, and save my poor companions, and deliver Athens from this cruel tribute."

"I knew that this would be your resolution," said Ariadne. "Come, then, with me, brave Theseus. Here is your own sword, which the guards deprived you of. You will need it; and pray Heaven you may use it well."

Then she led Theseus along by the hand until they came to a dark, shadowy grove, where the moonlight wasted itself on the tops of the trees, without shedding hardly so much as a glimmering beam upon their pathway. After going a good way through this obscurity, they reached a high, marble wall, which was overgrown with creeping plants that made it shaggy with their verdure. The wall seemed to have no door, nor any windows, but rose up, lofty, and massive, and mysterious, and was neither to be clambered over, nor, as far as Theseus could perceive, to be passed through. Nevertheless, Ariadne did but press one of her soft little fingers against a particular block of marble, and, though it looked as solid as any other part of the wall, it yielded to her touch, disclosing an entrance just wide enough to admit them. They crept through, and the marble stone swung back into its place.

"We are now," said Ariadne, "in the famous labyrinth which Dædalus built before he made himself a pair of wings, and flew away from our island like a bird. That Dædalus was a very cunning workman; but of all his artful contrivances, this labyrinth is the most wondrous. Were we to take but a few steps from the doorway, we might wander about all our lifetime, and never find it again. Yet in the very centre of this labyrinth is the Minotaur; and, Theseus, you must go hither to seek him."

“But how shall I ever find him?” asked Theseus, “if the labyrinth so bewilders me as you say it will?”

Just as he spoke, they heard a rough and very disagreeable roar, which greatly resembled the lowing of a fierce bull, but yet had some sort of sound like the human voice. Theseus even fancied a rude articulation in it, as if the creature that uttered it were trying to shape his hoarse breath into words. It was at some distance, however, and he really could not tell whether it sounded most like a bull’s roar or a man’s harsh voice.

“That is the Minotaur’s noise,” whispered Ariadne, closely grasping the hand of Theseus, and pressing one of her own hands to her heart, which was all in a tremble. “You must follow that sound through the windings of the labyrinth, and, by-and-by, you will find him. Stay! take the end of this silken string; I will hold the other end; and then, if you win the victory, it will lead you again to this spot. Farewell, brave Theseus.”

So the young man took the end of the silken string in his left hand, and his gold-hilted sword, ready drawn from its scabbard, in the other, and trod boldly into the inscrutable labyrinth. How this labyrinth was built is more than I can tell you; but so cunningly contrived a maze was never seen in the world, before nor since. There can be nothing else so intricate, unless it were the brain of a man like Dædalus, who planned it, or the heart of any ordinary man; which last, to be sure, is ten times as great a mystery as the labyrinth of Crete. Theseus had not taken five steps before he lost sight of Ariadne; and in five more his head was growing dizzy. But still he went on, now creeping through a low arch, now ascending a flight of steps, now in one crooked passage and now in another, with here a door opening before him, and there one banging behind, until it really seemed as if the walls spun round, and whirled him round along with them. And all the while, through these hollow avenues, now nearer, now farther off again, resounded the cry of the Minotaur; and the sound was so fierce, so cruel, so ugly, so like a bull’s roar, and withal so like a human voice, and yet like neither of them, that the brave heart of Theseus grew sterner and angrier at every step; for he felt it an insult to the moon and

sky, and to our affectionate and simple Mother Earth, that such a monster should have the audacity to exist.

As he passed onward, the clouds gathered over the moon, and the labyrinth grew so dusky that Theseus could no longer discern the bewilderment through which he was passing. He would have felt quite lost, and utterly hopeless of ever again walking in a straight path, if, every little while, he had not been conscious of a gentle twitch at the silken cord. Then he knew that the tender-hearted Ariadne was still holding the other end, and that she was fearing for him, and hoping for him, and giving him just as much of her sympathy as if she were close by his side. Oh, indeed, I can assure you, there was a vast deal of human sympathy running along that slender thread of silk. But still he followed the dreadful roar of the Minotaur, which now grew louder and louder, and finally so very loud that Theseus fully expected to come close upon him, at every new zigzag and wriggle of the path. And at last, in an open space, at the very centre of the labyrinth, he did discern the hideous creature.

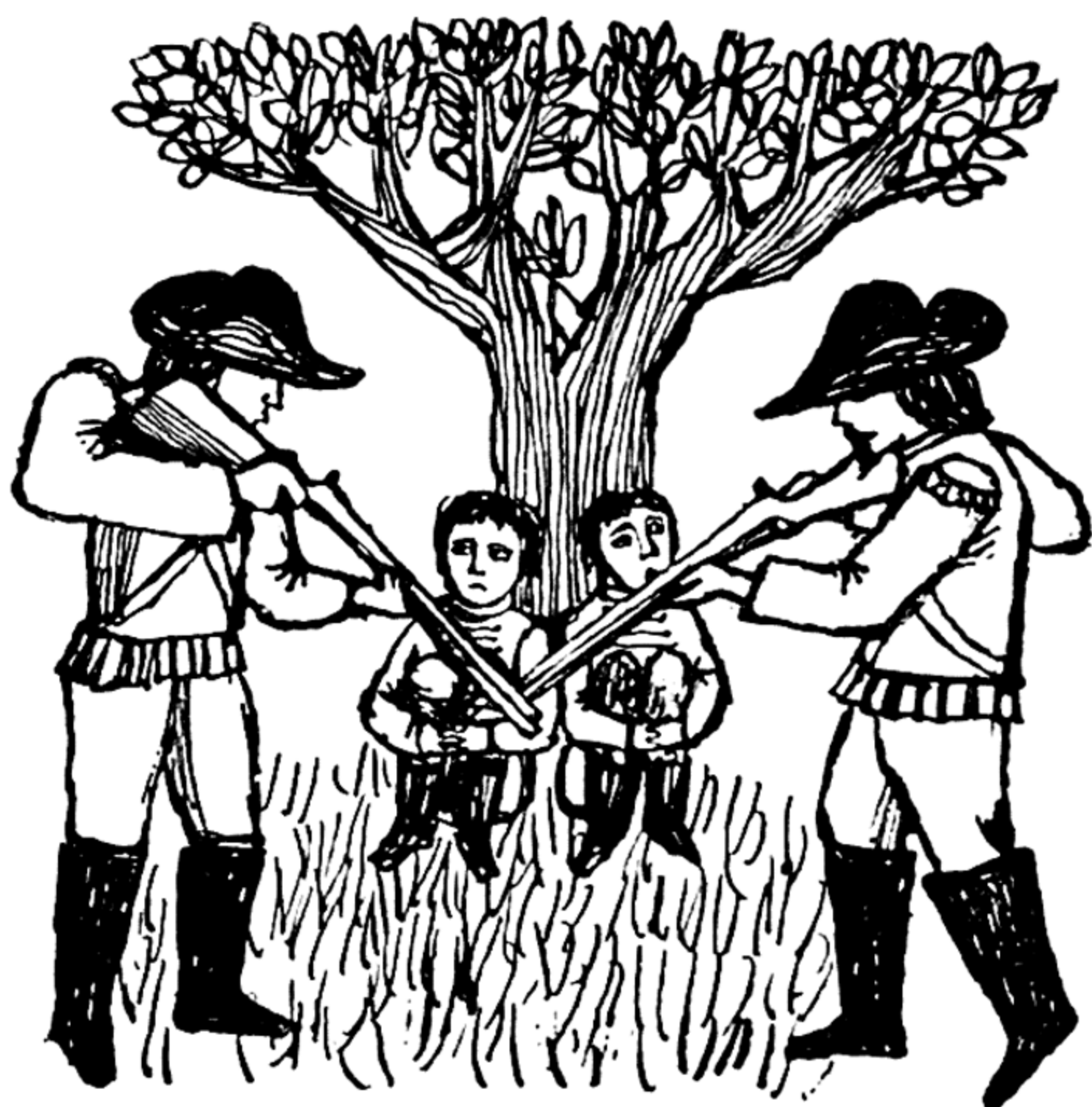
Sure enough, what an ugly monster it was! Only his horned head belonged to a bull; and yet somehow or other, he looked like a bull all over, preposterously waddling on his hind legs; or, if you happened to view him in another way, he seemed wholly a man, and all the more monstrous for being so. And there he was, the wretched thing, with no society, no companion, no kind of a mate, living only to do mischief, and incapable of knowing what affection means. Theseus hated him, and shuddered at him, and yet could not but be sensible of some sort of pity; and all the more, the uglier and more detestable the creature was. For he kept striding to and fro in a solitary frenzy of rage, continually emitting a hoarse roar, which was oddly mixed up with half-shaped words.

There ensued the most awful fight between Theseus and the Minotaur that ever happened beneath the sun or moon. I really know not how it might have turned out, if the monster, in his first headlong rush against Theseus, had not missed him, by a hairbreadth, and broken one of his horns short off against the stone wall. On this mishap, he bellowed so intolerably that a part of the labyrinth tumbled down, and all the inhabitants of

Theseus and the Minotaur

Crete mistook the noise for an uncommonly heavy thunderstorm. Smarting with the pain, he galloped around the open space in so ridiculous a way that Theseus laughed at it, long afterwards, though not precisely at the moment. After this, the two antagonists stood valiantly up to one another, and fought, sword to horn, for a long while. At last, the Minotaur made a run at Theseus, grazed his left side with his horn, and flung him down; and thinking that he had stabbed him to the heart, he cut a great caper in the air, opened his bull mouth from ear to ear, and prepared to snap his head off. But Theseus by this time had leaped up, and caught the monster off his guard. Fetching a sword stroke at him with all his force, he hit him fair upon the neck, and made his bull head skip six yards from his human body, which fell down flat upon the ground.

So now the battle was ended. Immediately the moon shone out as brightly as if all the troubles of the world, and all the wickedness and the ugliness that infest human life, were past and gone for ever. And Theseus, as he leaned on his sword, taking breath, felt another twitch of the silken cord; for all through the terrible encounter he had held it fast in his left hand. Eager to let Ariadne know of his success, he followed the guidance of the thread, and soon found himself at the entrance of the labyrinth.



Escape from the Prussians

G. A. HENTY

RALPH and Percy Barclay, two young Englishmen, join the French Army at the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War in 1870 and soon find themselves co-operating with the partisan forces, called *franc-tireurs*. Journeying from one group to another, they spend a night in an encampment which is surrounded by the Germans. They are forced to witness the punishment meted out to other prisoners by a harsh major of the German Army before they are started on their way to imprisonment in Germany. The two English youths, however, are determined to get back into the fighting, and with the aid of a sympathetic young woman find a way to escape into Luxembourg, and then Belgium. With them they take their old comrade, Tim Doyle. Once in Belgium their troubles for a time are over. The other adventures of the trio are told in *The Young Franc-Tireurs*, from which this story is taken.

Escape from the Prussians

The Germans were still at some distance from Besançon, being watched by Colonel Tempé and his Franc-Tireurs and by the irregular forces.

A considerable army was now fast gathering at Besançon, and the regimental and superior staff officers were hard at work at the organization. As aides-de-camp the boys had little to do, and therefore requested leave for two or three days to go up to their old friends, the Franc-Tireurs of Dijon. The general at once granted the required permission, adding, with a smile:

"Don't forget you are officers now, lads, and get into any hare-brained adventures, you know; and be sure you are back on Thursday, as I expect General Michel, my successor, to arrive on Friday, and I shall have to give you as part of my belongings."

"We are sure to be back, general." And so they set off, taking, as usual, Tim Doyle with them as orderly and servant.

The dusk had already fallen when they reached a party of Franc-Tireurs. It was not their own corps, nor could the officer in command tell exactly where they could find them.

"We are scattered over a considerable extent of country," he said, "and the colonel alone could tell you how we are all placed. I expect that he will be here to-night, and your best plan will be stay here till he comes. We have not much to offer you, but, such as it is, it is at your service."

After a moment's hesitation, the boys agreed to accept the offer. The village consisted of only three or four houses, and as there were fifty men in the party upon which they had come, they bivouacked under the trees hard by.

"How far off are the Germans?" Ralph asked, when dinner was over, and they lay by the fire smoking cigars.

"Ten miles or so," the officer answered, carelessly.

"No chance of their coming this way, I hope," Ralph laughed.

"We were very nearly caught near Saverne once."

"So I heard," the officer said, "but I am rather sceptical as to these night surprises. In nine cases out of ten—mind, I don't mean for a moment that it was so in your case—but in nine cases out of ten, these rumours of night attacks are all moon-shine."

"Good night, then," Ralph said briefly, and he wrapped himself in his cloak and lay down. "We are not accustomed to this sort of thing, Percy," he whispered to his brother in English, "and I don't like it. No wonder our Franc-Tireurs do so badly if this is a sample of their discipline."

"I don't like it either, Ralph. The Prussians are advancing, and if that fellow last heard of them as ten miles off, they are as likely as not to be only two. I shan't be sorry when morning comes."

At last, after keeping awake for hours, Ralph dozed off. How long he slept he knew not, but he was roused into full wakefulness by a touch on the shoulder, and by hearing Tim Doyle whisper—

"Hist, Mister Ralph, I've my doubts that there is something wrong. I couldn't sleep in this camp without watch or outposts, and for the last quarter of an hour I fancy I've been hearing noises. I don't know which way they are coming, but it seems to me they are all round us. I may be wrong, sir, but as sure as the piper——"

"Hush, Tim!" Ralph said to the Irishman, who had crawled noiselessly along, and had lain down by his side. "Percy, are you awake?"

"Yes, I woke at Tim's whisper; listen."

They did listen, and distinctly above the sighing of the wind they could hear a rustling, cracking noise. Day was just breaking, but the light was not sufficiently strong to show objects with any distinctness among the trees.

"By jove, we are surrounded!" Percy said, and was just going to alarm the camp when the sentry, startled into wakefulness, challenged and fired.

The Franc-Tireurs woke and leapt to their feet. Percy and Tim were about to do the same when Ralph held them down. "Lie still," he said, "for your lives."

His words were not out of his lips when a tremendous volley rang out all round them, and half the Franc-Tireurs fell.

"Now!" Ralph said, leaping up, "make a rush for a house. To the houses all of you," he shouted loudly; "it is our only chance; we shall be shot down here like sheep."

The officer of the Franc-Tireurs had already atoned for his

carelessness by his life, and the men obeyed Ralph's call, and amidst a heavy fire rushed across the fifty yards of open space to the houses. The door was burst in with the rush. Ralph had not stopped at the first house, but, followed by his brother and Tim Doyle, had run farther on, and entered the last house in the village.

"Why did you not go in with the others, Ralph? We have no chance of defending ourselves here, we have only our revolvers."

"We have no chance of defending ourselves anywhere, Percy," Ralph said; "there must be a couple of hundred of them at least, and not above fifteen or twenty at most of the Franc-Tireurs gained the houses. Resistance is utterly useless, and yet had I been with those poor fellows I could not have told them to surrender, when they would probably be shot five minutes afterwards. We should be simply throwing away our lives without doing the least good."

There was a heavy firing now heard, and a moment after half a dozen shots were fired through the window. Then there was a rush of soldiers towards the door which Ralph had purposely left open.

"We surrender," Ralph shouted in German, coming forward to meet them. "We are French officers."

"Don't fire," a voice said, and then a young officer came forward. "You are not Franc-Tireurs?" he asked, for the light was still insufficient to enable him to distinguish uniforms.

"We are officers of the army upon General Cambriels' staff. This man is an orderly. Here are our swords. We surrender as prisoners of war."

The German officer bowed. "Keep your swords for the present, gentlemen; I am not in command."

At this moment another officer came up. "Who have we here, Von Hersen? Why do you make prisoners?"

"They are two staff-officers, major."

"Hem," said the major doubtfully. "Well, if you are an officer," he continued, "order your men to cease their resistance."

The Franc-Tireurs, most of whom had taken refuge in the same cottage, were still defending themselves desperately, and were keeping up a heavy fire from the windows.

"I will order them to surrender at once," Ralph said quietly, "if you give me your word that they shall be treated as prisoners of war."

"I will do nothing of the sort, sir," the German answered.

"Then I shall certainly not advise them to surrender," Ralph said firmly. "I have no authority whatever over them, but if I give advice it would be that they should sell their lives as dearly as possible."

The officer swore a deep German oath and strode off. For five more minutes the fight continued round the cottage, many of the Germans falling, then a rush was made, there was a fierce contest inside the house, shouts, shrieks, cries for mercy, and then all was still.

The young Barclays and Tim were now told to sit down near a tree at a short distance off, with two sentries with loaded rifles standing over them. The German soldiers took from the houses what few articles they fancied, and then set fire to them, sitting down and eating their breakfast as the flames shot up. At a short distance from where the Barclays were sitting was a group of some eight or ten Franc-Tireurs and six or seven peasants, guarded by some soldiers. Near them the German major and two lieutenants were talking. One of the young men appeared to take little interest in the conversation, but the other was evidently urging some point with great earnestness, and the major was equally plainly refusing his request, for he stamped his foot angrily and shook his head.

The officers passed near enough for the Barclays to catch what they were saying.

The young lieutenant was very pale. "For the last time, major, I implore you."

"For the last time, Lieutenant von Hersen," the major said, "I order you to do your duty, and, by Heavens, if you speak another word I will put you in arrest!"

The young lieutenant turned silently away, called up twenty men, and ordered them to place the Franc-Tireurs and the peasants against a wall.

"This is horrible, Ralph," Percy said; "that scoundrel is going to shoot them in cold blood."

"I protest against this execution," Ralph said in a loud tone,

advancing towards the major, "as a cold-blooded murder, and a violation of all the rights of war."

"Hold your tongue, sir," the German major said, turning to him furiously, "or, by Heavens, I will put you up there too!"

"You dare not," Ralph said firmly. "Outrage as you do every law of civilization and humanity, you dare not shoot an officer of the army in cold blood."

The major turned black with passion.

"By Heavens!"—he exclaimed.

But the officer who had not hitherto interposed threw himself before him.

"Pardon me, major," he said respectfully, "but the Frenchman is right. It would bring discredit upon the whole army to touch these prisoners of war. In the other matter I have nothing to say. The order has been published that Franc-Tireurs and peasants sheltering them shall be shot, and it is not for me to discuss orders but to obey them; but this is a matter affecting all our honours."

The major stood for a moment irresolute, but he knew well that the German military authorities would punish, probably with death, the atrocity which he meditated, and he said hoarsely to some of the men near, "Tie their arms behind their backs, and take them farther into the wood."

Ralph, his brother, and Tim Doyle were hurried into the wood by their guards; but strict as is the discipline of the German army, they could see that they disapproved in the highest degree of the conduct of their commanding officer.

They were still near enough to see what was passing in the village. Not a man of the Franc-Tireurs begged his life, but stood upright against the wall. Two of the peasants imitated their example, as did a boy of not over thirteen years of age. Two other lads of the same age and a peasant fell on their knees and prayed piteously for life. The young officer turned round towards the major in one now mute appeal. It was in vain.

"Put your rifles within a foot of their heads," the lieutenant said. "Fire!"

When the smoke cleared away the soldiers were standing alone, and the peasants and Franc-Tireurs lay in a confused mass on the ground.

The lieutenant walked up to the major with a steady step, but with a face as pale as ashes. "I have done my duty, Major Kolbach; your orders are obeyed." Then without another word he drew out his revolver, put it rapidly to his temple and blew out his brains.

Brutal as Major Kolbach was, he started back in horror as the young lieutenant fell dead at his feet, while a cry of surprise and consternation broke from the men. The major did not say a word, but turned away and paced up and down with disturbed steps, while the other lieutenant bent over the body of his comrade, and seeing that he was dead, in a hushed voice ordered the men who had run up to dig a grave under the trees and bring him there. When this was done he ordered the men to fall in, placing the Barclays and Tim in their midst, and then went up to the major and saluted, saying coldly that the men were ready to march. The major nodded, signed to the orderly who was holding his horse to approach, vaulted into the saddle and rode along the road back toward the main body of the army. The lieutenant gave the word and the column marched off, leaving behind it the still smoking houses, and the still warm bodies of some sixty men.

The next day, when they were summoned to start, they found that there were fifty or sixty other prisoners who had been brought in from other directions. The Barclays were the only officers. They therefore took their places at the head of the prisoners, who formed four deep, with an escort of Uhlans, and set off on their march.

It was four days' march, the weather was cold and clear, and the Barclays were but little fatigued when they marched into Luneville. They slept at a hotel, and were down at the station at the appointed time. It was a long journey—thirty-six hours to Mayence. But the boys were too pleased, when they saw the line that the train was following, to have cared had it been twice as far. The difficulties of escape from the western fortresses would have been immense, whereas at Mayence they were comparatively close to the frontier. At Mayence, too, the position of the prisoners was comfortable. They were allowed to live anywhere in the town, and to take their meals when they chose; they were obliged twice a day to answer at the muster-roll, and

were not, of course, allowed to go outside the fortifications.

The first thing that the Barclays did, after reporting themselves, was to settle themselves in a lodging. The family consisted of a father, who was away all day at the railway station, where he was a clerk, the mother, a garrulous old woman, and a daughter, a pretty blue-eyed girl of about Ralph's age, who assisted her mother to wait upon them. She had a lover away as a soldier in the army besieging Paris, and the thought that he might be wounded or taken prisoner made her very pitiful to the young officers.

Ralph Barclay had for some days been intending to sound her as to her willingness to aid them, when she herself began it one day. She had cleared away their dinner and was standing, as she often did, talking with them, when she lowered her voice, so as not to be overheard by her mother in the next room:

"I wonder you don't try to get away. Lots of French officers have done so."

"The real difficulty is to get outside the gate," Ralph said. "After that I should have no fear."

"What are you thinking of doing, then?" Christine asked.

"I was thinking of dressing Percy and myself in the clothes of young peasants, and putting Tim into something of the same sort, with a great bandage round his face. Then I should say that we were two lads from some place near the frontier who had come here to meet our uncle, who had had his jaw shattered in battle. That would explain Tim's not being able to talk at all."

"Yes," Christine said, "that would do very well; but of course you would be liable to be asked for papers."

"Of course," Ralph said. "But we must risk something."

"I have an idea," Christine said suddenly, clapping her hands. "I have some cousins living at Wiesbaden. These are three boys, and I am sure they would do anything for me. I will go out to Wiesbaden tomorrow and ask them to lend me their papers just for one day. Wiesbaden is not your way at all, but for that reason you would get out more easily there, and be less likely to be suspected or followed. You could cross the Rhine somewhere near St. Goar. I shall have to tell some sad stories to my cousins, and coax them a great deal."

Ten minutes afterwards Ralph went down the stairs and out

into the street dressed as a German labourer in his best suit. He was a little uneasy at first, but no one noticed him, and he was soon in a shop haggling over the price of a peasant's coat, as if the matter of a thaler one way or other was a thing of vital importance to him. He bought the three suits at three different shops, as he thought that it would look suspicious if he were to get them all at the same, and in an hour was back again.

An hour afterwards Christine started for Wiesbaden.

The next morning they answered as usual to their early roll-call, and then returning at once to their lodgings, changed their clothes for those which Ralph had purchased. Then Christine came in and said good-bye and went to a window to watch if they went safely down the street. They passed across the bridge of boats without question, and into the railway station, which was just opposite its end. Here soldiers and other officials swarmed, but the three walked along carelessly, the two boys chatting together in German, Tim walking with his hand up to his face, and giving an occasional stamp of pain. He sat down with Percy on a seat in the station, while Ralph went to the little window where tickets were being delivered. There were a good many people waiting, and when it came to Ralph's turn, and he put the papers in at the window and asked for three third-class tickets to Wiesbaden, the clerk scarcely glanced at them, but handed the tickets over without a question.

"Which way shall we go, Ralph?" asked Percy when they got off the train at Wiesbaden.

They turned into the town. Ralph separated from the others and went and bought blankets. Ten minutes later they were walking along at a steady pace from the town. Each carried a stick; the boys carried theirs upon their shoulder, with a bundle containing a change of clothes and other articles slung upon it. Tim carried his bundle in one hand, and walked using his stick in the other. When a short distance out of the town they stopped in a retired place, and put some strips of plaster upon Tim's cheeks, and wrapped up his face with a white bandage. It was, as he said, "mighty uncomfortable," but as he was now able to dispense with the ball of cotton in his mouth, he did not so much mind it.

The day was bitterly cold, for it was now the beginning of the

second week of November, but the party strode on, full of the consciousness of freedom. They had brought some bread and cold meat with them from Mayence, and therefore had no need to go into any shops at the villages they passed. When it became dark they turned off from the road and made for a wood at a short distance from it. Here they ate their supper, laid a blanket on the ground, put the bundles down for pillows, and lay down close together, putting the other two blankets over them.

At daybreak next morning they were up, but it was some little time before they could start, so stiffened were their limbs with the cold. They walked for an hour, when they arrived at a large village. Here it was agreed they should go in and buy something to eat. They entered the ale-house, and called for bread, cheese and beer.

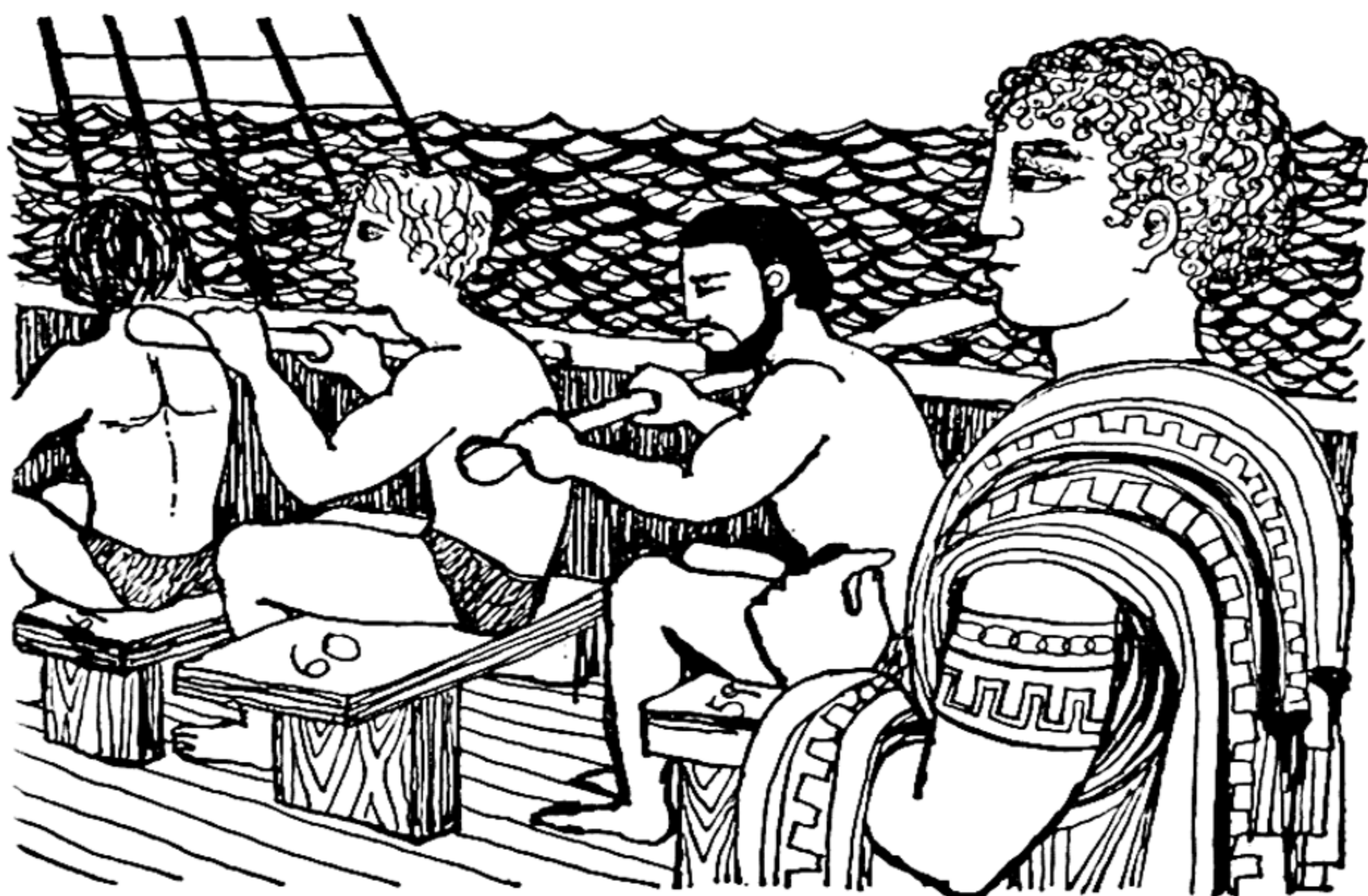
An hour later they arrived at St. Goarshaus. They were now quite out of the track which prisoners escaping from Mayence would be likely to take, and had not the slightest difficulty in getting a boat to cross the Rhine. They landed at St. Goar, and tramped gaily on to Castellan, and slept in a barn near that village.

The next morning they were off before daybreak, and eight miles farther crossed the Moselle at Zell. They left the road before they arrived at Alf, and keeping among the hills crossed the main road between Bertrich and Wittlich, and slept in a copse near Dudeldorf. They had walked five-and-thirty miles, and were so dead beat that even the cold did not keep them awake. Next morning they got a fresh supply of bread and cheese at a tiny village between Dudeldorf and Bittburg, and leaving the latter place to the left, made straight for the frontier across the hills. The road to the frontier ran through Bittburg, but they were afraid of keeping to it, as there were sure to be troops at the frontier. Several times they lost their way, but the pocket compass and map which they had brought with them stood them in good stead, and late in the evening they arrived at the stream which forms the frontier. It was fortunately very low, for the cold had frozen up its sources; they had therefore little difficulty in crossing, and, tired as they were, gave a cheer upon finding themselves in Luxembourg.

They tramped along merrily until they came to a cottage,

where they boldly entered, and were received with the greatest kindness and hospitality. After some discussion the boys agreed that next morning they should dress themselves in the change of clothes they had brought, which were ordinary shooting suits, and should leave their other clothes behind, and then walk as far as Spa, twenty miles to the north. They would excite no suspicion in the minds of anyone who saw them arrive, as they would merely be taken for three Englishmen staying at one of the numerous hotels there returning from a walk. Their feet, however, were so much swollen the next morning that they were glad to remain another day quiet in the cottage, and the following day they started and walked gaily into Spa.

After strolling about the place some time they went to the railway station at the time the evening train started for Brussels, asked for tickets in very English French, and at eleven o'clock at night entered Brussels. Here their troubles were over, a good night's rest in a good hotel completely set them up again, and the next morning they left by train for Dunkirk. There they reported themselves to the French officer in command, and received permission to go on board a Government steamer which was to leave the next morning for Cherbourg.



A Slave Wins Freedom

LEW WALLACE

WHEN Arrius the Roman tribune went to sea in command of the galley *Astræa*, he little thought that among the slaves on their long benches, and bending their backs to the oars, he would find a man who would become a son to him. Yet he was attracted by the stature and bearing of a young man who was a Jew, and Arrius, without knowing why, was drawn towards the slave, and had him freed of his irons, so that he could move his body with less restraint. He was to be rewarded later, after the Romans had been attacked by pirates, for the Jewish youth was the means of saving the life of the Roman tribune, who showed his appreciation in a manner to make his Roman friends wonder much. The further adventures of the Jewish youth who dived into the sea to save a task-master's life and so won freedom are told in *Ben-Hur*, from which this story is taken.

At noon the galley was skimming the sea off Pæstum. The wind was yet from the west, filling the sail to the master's content.

From his platform in the cabin Arrius kept watchful eye over his command, and was as closely watched by them. He saw critically everything in view, but dwelt longest upon the rowers.

There was no need of keeping the proper names of the slaves brought to the galleys as to their graves; so, for convenience, they were usually identified by the numerals painted upon the benches to which they were assigned. As the sharp eyes of the great man moved from seat to seat on either hand, they came at last to number sixty.

The bench of number sixty was slightly above the level of the platform, and but a few feet away. The light glinting through the grating over his head gave the rower fairly to the tribune's view—erect, and, like all his fellows, naked except a cincture about the loins. There were, however, some points in his favour. He was very young, not more than twenty.

In course of the study, Arrius observed the subject's youth; wholly unconscious of tenderness on that account, he also observed that he seemed of good height, and that his limbs, upper and nether, were singularly perfect. The arms, perhaps, were too long, but the objection was well hidden under a mass of muscle which, in some movements, swelled and knotted like kinking cords. Every rib in the round body was discernible; yet the leanness was the healthful reduction so strained after in the palæstræ. And altogether there was in the rower's action a certain harmony which, besides addressing itself to the tribune's theory, stimulated both his curiosity and general interest.

Very soon he found himself waiting to catch a view of the man's face in full. The head was shapely, and balanced upon a neck broad at the base, but of exceeding pliancy and grace. The features in profile were of Oriental outline, and of that delicacy of expression which has always been thought a sign of blood and sensitive spirit. With these observations, the tribune's interest in the subject deepened.

"By the gods," he said to himself, "the fellow impresses me! He promises well. I will know more of him."

Directly the tribune caught the view he wished—the rower turned and looked at him.

"A Jew! and a boy!"

Under the gaze then fixed steadily upon him, the large eyes of the slave grew larger—the blood surged to his very brow—the blade lingered in his hands. But instantly, with an angry crash, down fell the gavel of the hortator. The rower started, withdrew his face from the inquisitor, and, as if personally chidden, dropped the oar half-feathered. When he glanced again at the tribune, he was vastly more astonished—he was met with a kindly smile.

Meantime the galley entered the Straits of Messina, and, skimming past the city of that name, was after a while turned eastward, leaving the cloud over Etna in the sky astern.

Often as Arrius returned to his platform in the cabin, he returned to study the rower, and he kept saying to himself, "The fellow hath a spirit. A Jew is not a barbarian. I will know more of him."

The fourth day out, and the *Astræa* was speeding through the Ionian Sea. The sky was clear, and the wind blew as if bearing the goodwill of all the gods.

Arrius stood under the aplustre of the galley. Lifting his eyes from the solarium set under the aplustre for reference in keeping the course, Arrius beheld the rower from number sixty approaching.

"The chief called thee the noble Arrius, and said it was thy will that I should seek thee here. I am come."

"The hortator tells me thou art his best rower."

"The hortator is very kind," the rower answered.

"Hast thou seen much service?"

"About three years."

"At the oars?"

"I cannot recall a day of rest from them."

"From thy speech, thou art a Jew."

"My father was a prince of Jerusalem, and, as a merchant, he sailed the seas. He was known and honoured in the guest-chamber of the great Augustus."

"His name?"

"Ithamar, of the House of Hur."

The tribune raised his hand in astonishment.

"A son of Hur—thou?"

After a silence, he asked:

"What brought thee here?"

Judah lowered his head, and his breast laboured hard. When his feelings were sufficiently mastered, he looked the tribune in the face, and answered:

"I was accused of attempting to assassinate Valerius Gratus, the procurator."

"Dost thou admit thy guilt?" asked Arrius sternly.

"Thou hast heard of the God of my fathers," he said; "of the infinite Jehovah. By His truth and almightiness, and by the love with which He hath followed Israel from the beginning, I swear I am innocent!"

The tribune was much moved.

"Didst thou not have a trial?" he asked.

"No!"

The Roman raised his head, surprised.

"No trial—no witnesses! Who passed judgment upon thee?"

"They bound me with cords, and dragged me to a vault in the Tower. I saw no one. No one spoke to me. Next day soldiers took me to the seaside. I have been a galley-slave ever since."

For once the tribune was at loss, and hesitated. His power was ample. He was monarch of the ship. His prepossessions all moved him to mercy. His faith was won. Yet, he said to himself, there was no haste—or, rather, there was haste to Cythera; the best rower could not then be spared; he would wait; he would learn more; he would at least be sure this was the prince Ben-Hur, and that he was of a right disposition. Ordinarily slaves were liars.

"Go now," Arrius said, "and do not build upon what has passed between us. Go!"

A short while after Ben-Hur was upon his bench again.

A man's task is always light if his heart is light. Handling the oar did not seem so toilsome to Judah. A hope had come to him, like a singing bird. He could hardly see the visitor or hear its song: that it was there, though, he knew; his feelings told him so. That he had been called by the great man and asked his story was the bread upon which he fed his hungry spirit. Surely something good would come of it. The light about his bench was clear and bright with promises, and he prayed.

“O God! I am a true son of the Israel Thou hast so loved! Help me, I pray Thee!”

In the Bay of Antemona, east of Cythera the island, the hundred galleys assembled. There the tribune gave one day to inspection. He sailed then to Naxos, the largest of the Cyclades, midway the coasts of Greece and Asia, from which he could challenge everything that passed; at the same time, he would be in position to go after the pirates instantly, whether they were in the *Ægean* or out on the Mediterranean.

As the fleet, in order, rowed in towards the mountain shores of the island, a galley was descried coming from the north. Arrius went to meet it. She proved to be a transport just from Byzantium, and from her commander he learned the particulars of which he stood in most need.

The pirates were from all the farther shores of the Euxine. There were quite sixty galleys in the squadron, all well manned and supplied. A Greek was in command, and the pilots, said to be familiar with all the Eastern seas, were Greek. The plunder had been incalculable. The panic, consequently, was not on the sea alone; cities, with closed gates, sent their people nightly to the walls. Traffic had almost ceased.

Where were the pirates now?

To this question, of most interest to Arrius, he received answer.

After sacking Hephæstia, on the island of Lemnos, the enemy had coursed across to the Thessalian group, and, by last account, disappeared in the gulfs between Eubœa and Hellas.

Such were the tidings.

The island of Eubœa lies along the coast like a rampart against Asia, leaving a channel between it and the continent quite a hundred and twenty miles in length, and scarcely an average of eight in width. The inlet on the north had admitted the fleet of Xerxes, and now it received the bold raiders from the Euxine. The towns along the Pelasgic and Meliac gulfs were rich and their plunder seductive. All things considered, therefore, Arrius judged that the robbers might be found somewhere below Thermopylæ. Welcoming the chance, he resolved to enclose them north and south, to do which not an hour could be

lost. So he sailed away without stop or tack, until, a little before nightfall, Mount Ocha was seen upreared against the sky, and the pilot reported the Eubœan coast.

At a signal the fleet rested upon its oars. When the movement was resumed, Arrius led a division of fifty of the galleys, intending to take them up the channel, while another division, equally strong, turned their prows to the outer or seaward side of the island, with orders to make all haste to the upper inlet, and descend sweeping the waters.

Meantime Ben-Hur kept his bench, relieved every six hours. The rest in the Bay of Antemona had freshened him, so that the oar was not troublesome, and the chief on the platform found no fault.

In his long service, by watching the shifting of the meagre sun-beams upon the cabin floor when the ship was under way, he had come to know, generally, the quarter into which she was sailing. In common with his fellow-slaves, he knew nothing of the situation, and had no interest in the voyage. His place was at the oar, and he was held there inexorably, whether at anchor or under sail. Once only in three years had he been permitted an outlook from the deck. The occasion we have seen. He had no idea that, following the vessel he was helping to drive, there was a great squadron close at hand and in beautiful order; no more did he know the object of which it was in pursuit.

When the sun, going down, withdrew his last ray from the cabin, the galley still held northward. Night fell, yet Ben-Hur could discern no change. About that time the smell of incense floated down the gangways from the deck.

"The tribune is at the altar," he thought. "Can it be we are going into battle?"

He became observant.

Now he had been in many battles without having seen one. From his bench he had heard them above and about him, until he was familiar with all their notes, almost as a singer with a song. So, too, he had become acquainted with many of the preliminaries of an engagement, of which, with a Roman as well as a Greek, the most invariable was the sacrifice to the gods. And when, finally, Ben-Hur saw the tribune mount his platform and don his armour, and get his helmet and shield out, the meaning

of the preparations might not be any longer doubted, and he made ready for the last ignominy of his service.

To every bench, as a fixture, there was a chain with heavy anklets. These the hortator proceeded to lock upon the oarsmen, going from number to number, leaving no choice but to obey, and, in event of disaster, no possibility of escape.

The hortator approached. Now he was at number one—the rattle of the iron links sounded horribly. At last number sixty! Calm from despair, Ben-Hur held his oar at poise, and gave his foot to the officer. Then the tribune stirred—sat up—beckoned to the chief.

A strong revulsion seized the Jew. From the hortator, the great man glanced at him; and when he dropped his oar all the section of the ship on his side seemed aglow. He heard nothing of what was said; enough that the chain hung idly from its staple in the bench, and that the chief, going to his seat, began to beat the sounding-board. With his breast against the leaded handle, he pushed with all his might—pushed until the shaft bent as if about to break.

The chief went to the tribune, and, smiling, pointed to number sixty.

“What strength!” he said.

“And what spirit!” the tribune answered. “He is better without the irons. Put them on him no more.”

So saying, he stretched himself upon the couch again.

The ship sailed on hour after hour under the oars in water scarcely rippled by the wind. And the people not on duty slept, Arrius in his place, the marines on the floor.

The deeper darkness before the dawn was upon the waters, and all things going well with the *Astræa*, when a man, descending from the deck, walked swiftly to the platform where the tribune slept, and awoke him. Arrius arose, put on his helmet, sword and shield, and went to the commander of the marines.

“The pirates are close by. Up and ready!” he said, and passed to the stairs, calm, confident.

Every soul aboard, even the ship, awoke. Officers went to their quarters. The marines took arms, and were led out, looking in all respects like legionaries. Sheaves of arrows and armfuls of javelins were carried on deck. By the central stairs the

oil-tanks and fire-balls were set ready for use. Additional lanterns were lighted. Buckets were filled with water. The rowers in relief assembled under guard in front of the chief. As Providence would have it, Ben-Hur was one of the latter. Overhead he heard the muffled noises of the final preparations—of the sailors furling sail, spreading the nettings, unslinging the machines, and hanging the armour of bull-hide over the sides. Presently quiet settled about the galley again; quiet full of vague dread and expectation, which, interpreted, means *ready*.

At a signal passed down from the deck, and communicated to the hortator by a petty officer stationed on the stairs, all at once the oars stopped.

What did it mean?

A sound like the rowing of galleys astern attracted Ben-Hur, and the *Astræa* rocked as if in the midst of countering waves. The idea of a fleet at hand broke upon him—a fleet in manœuvre—forming probably for attack. His blood started with the fancy.

Another signal came down from the deck. The oars dipped, and the galley started imperceptibly. No sound from without, none from within, yet each man in the cabin instinctively poised himself for a shock; the very ship seemed to catch the sense, and hold its breath, and go crouched tiger-like.

At last there was a sound of trumpets on deck, full, clear, long blown. The chief beat the sounding-board until it rang; the rowers reached forward full length, and deepening the dip of their oars, pulled suddenly with all their united force. The galley, quivering in every timber, answered with a leap. Other trumpets joined in the clamour—all from the rear, none forward—from the latter quarter only a rising of voices in tumult heard briefly. There was a mighty blow; the rowers in front of the chief's platform reeled, some of them fell; the ship bounded back, recovered, and rushed on more irresistibly than before. Shrill and high arose the shrieks of men in terror; over the blare of trumpets, and the grind and crash of the collision, they arose; then under his feet, under the keel, pounding, rumbling, breaking to pieces, drowning, Ben-Hur felt something overridden. The men about him looked at each other afraid. A shout of triumph from the deck—the beak of the Roman had

won! But who were they whom the sea had drunk? Of what tongue, from what land were they?

No pause, no stay! Forward rushed the *Astræa*; and, as it went, some sailors ran down, and plunging the cotton balls into the oil-tanks, tossed them dripping to comrades at the head of the stairs; fire was to be added to other horrors of the combat.

Directly the galley heeled over so far that the oarsmen on the uppermost side with difficulty kept their benches. Again the hearty Roman cheer, and with it despairing shrieks. An opposing vessel, caught by the grappling-hooks of the great crane swinging from the prow, was being lifted into the air that it might be dropped and sunk.

The shouting increased on the right hand and on the left; before, behind, swelled an indescribable clamour. Occasionally there was a crash, followed by sudden peals of fright, telling of other ships ridden down, and their crews drowned in the vortexes.

Nor was the fight all on one side. Now and then a Roman in armour was borne down the hatchway, and laid bleeding, sometimes dying, on the floor.

Sometimes, also, puffs of smoke, blended with steam, and foul with the scent of roasting human flesh, poured into the cabin, turning the dimming light into yellow murk. Gasping for breath the while, Ben-Hur knew they were passing through the cloud of a ship on fire, and burning up with the rowers chained to the benches.

The *Astræa* all this time was in motion. Suddenly she stopped. The oars forward were dashed from the hands of the rowers, and the rowers from their benches. On deck, then, a furious trampling, and on the sides a grinding of ships afoul of each other. For the first time the beating of the gavel was lost in the uproar. Men sank on the floor in fear or looked about seeking a hiding-place. In the midst of the panic a body plunged or was pitched headlong down the hatchway, falling near Ben-Hur. He beheld the half-naked carcass, a mass of hair blackening the face, and under it a shield of bull-hide and wicker-work—a barbarian from the white-skinned nations of the North whom death had robbed of plunder and revenge. How came he there? An iron hand had snatched him from the opposing deck—no, the *Astræa*

had been boarded! The Romans were fighting on their own deck! A chill smote the young Jew; Arrius was hard pressed—he might be defending his own life. If he should be slain! God of Abraham forefend! The hopes and dreams so lately come, were they only hopes and dreams? Mother and sister—house—home—Holy Land—was he not to see them, after all?

It should not be—Arrius should not die. At least, better perish with him than survive a galley-slave.

Once more Ben-Hur looked around. Upon the roof of the cabin the battle yet beat; against the sides the hostile vessels yet crushed and grided. On the benches, the slaves struggled to tear loose from their chains, and, finding their efforts vain, howled like madmen; the guards had gone upstairs; discipline was out, panic in. No, the chief kept his chair, unchanged, calm as ever—except the gavel, weaponless. Vainly with his clangour he filled the lulls in the din. Ben-Hur gave him a last look, then broke away—not in flight, but to seek the tribune.

A very short space lay between him and the stairs of the hatchway aft. He took it with a leap, and was half-way up the steps—up far enough to catch a glimpse of the sky blood-red with fire, of the ships alongside, of the sea covered with ships and wrecks—when suddenly his foothold was knocked away, and he pitched backward. The floor, when he reached it, seemed to be lifting itself and breaking to pieces; then, in a twinkling, the whole after-part of the hull broke asunder, and, as it had all the time been lying in wait, the sea, hissing and foaming, leaped in, and all became darkness and surging water to Ben-Hur.

It cannot be said that the young Jew helped himself in this stress. Besides his usual strength, he had the indefinite extra force which nature keeps in reserve for just such perils to life; yet the darkness, and the whirl and roar of water stupefied him. Even the holding his breath was involuntary.

The influx of the flood tossed him like a log forward into the cabin, where he would have drowned but for the refluent motion. As it was, fathoms under the surface the hollow mass vomited him forth, and he arose along with the loosed débris. In the act of rising, he clutched something, and held to it. The time he was under seemed an age longer than it really

was; at last he gained the top; with a great gasp he filled his lungs afresh, and, tossing the water from his hair and eyes, climbed higher upon the plank he held, and looked about him.

Smoke lay upon the sea like a semi-transparent fog, through which here and there shone cores of intense brilliance. A quick intelligence told him that they were ships on fire. The battle was yet on; nor could he say who was victor. Within the radius of his vision now and then ships passed, shooting shadows athwart lights. Out of the dun clouds farther on he caught the crash of other ships colliding. The danger, however, was closer at hand. When the *Astræa* went down, her deck, it will be recollected, held her own crew, and the crews of the two galleys which had attacked her at the same time, all of whom were engulfed. Many of them came to the surface together, and on the same plank or support of whatever kind continued the combat, begun possibly in the vortex fathoms down. With their struggles he had nothing to do; they were all his enemies: not one of them but would kill him for the plank upon which he floated. He made haste to get away.

About that time he heard oars in quickest movement, and beheld a galley coming down upon him. The tall prow seemed doubly tall, and the red light playing upon its gilt and carving gave it an appearance of snaky life. Under its foot the water churned to flying foam.

He struck out, pushing the plank, which was very broad and unmanageable. Seconds were precious—half a second might save or lose him. In the crisis of the effort, up from the sea, within arm's reach, a helmet shot like a gleam of gold. Next came two hands with fingers extended—large hands were they, and strong—their hold once fixed might not be loosed. Ben-Hur swerved from them appalled. Up rose the helmet and the head it encased—then two arms, which began to beat the water wildly—the head turned back, and gave the face to the light. The mouth gaping wide; the eyes open, but sightless, and the bloodless pallor of a drowning man—never anything more ghastly! Yet he gave a cry of joy at the sight, and as the face was going under again, he caught the sufferer by the chain which passed from the helmet beneath the chin and drew him to the plank.

The man was Arrius, the tribune.

For a while the water foamed and eddied violently about Ben-Hur, taxing all his strength to hold to the support and at the same time keep the Roman's head above the surface. The galley had passed, leaving the two barely outside the stroke of its oars. Right through the floating men, over heads helmeted as well as heads bare, she drove, in her wake nothing but the sea sparkling with fire. A muffled crash, succeeded by a great outcry, made the rescuer look again from his charge. A certain savage pleasure touched his heart—the *Astræa* was avenged.

After that the battle moved on. Resistance turned to flight. But who were the victors? Ben-Hur was sensible how much his freedom and the life of the tribune depended upon that event. He pushed the plank under the latter until it floated him, after which all his care was to keep him there. The dawn came slowly. He watched its growing hopefully, yet sometimes afraid. Would it bring the Romans or the pirates? If the pirates, his charge was lost.

An hour passed thus. His anxiety increased. If relief came not speedily, Arrius would die. Sometimes he seemed already dead, he lay so still. He took the helmet off, and then, with greater difficulty, the cuirass; the heart he found fluttering. He took hope at the sign, and held on. There was nothing to do but wait, and, after the manner of his people, pray.

The throes of recovery from drowning are more painful than the drowning. These Arrius passed through, and, at length, to Ben-Hur's delight, reached the point of speech.

Gradually, from incoherent questions as to where he was, and by whom and how he had been saved, he reverted to the battle. The doubt of the victory stimulated his faculties to full return, a result aided not a little by a long rest—such as could be had on their frail support. After a while he became talkative.

“Our rescue, I see, depends upon the result of the fight. I see also what thou hast done for me. To speak fairly, thou hast saved my life at the risk of thy own. I make the acknowledgment broadly; and, whatever cometh, thou hast my thanks. If I live, I will make thee free, and restore thee to thy home and people; or thou mayest give thyself to the pursuit that pleaseth thee most. Dost thou hear?”

A Slave Wins Freedom

"I could not choose but hear. Blessed be the God of my fathers, yonder cometh a ship!"

"In what direction?"

"From the north."

"Canst thou tell her nationality by outward signs?"

"No. My service hath been at the oars."

"Hath she a flag?"

"I cannot see one."

Arrius remained quiet some time, apparently in deep reflection.

"Does the ship hold this way yet?" he at length asked.

"Still this way."

"If Roman, she hath a helmet over the mast's top."

"Then be of cheer. I see the helmet."

Still Arrius was not assured.

"She stops and puts a boat over her side. The men in the small boat are taking in the people afloat. Pirates are not humane."

"They may need rowers," Arrius replied, recurring, possibly, to times when he had made rescues for the purpose.

Ben-Hur was very watchful of the actions of the strangers.

"The ship moves off," he said.

"Whither?"

"Over on our right there is a galley which I take to be deserted. The new-comer heads towards it. Now she is alongside. Now she is sending men aboard."

Then Arrius opened his eyes and threw off his calm.

"Thank thou thy God," he said to Ben-Hur, after a look at the galleys, "thank thou thy God, as I do my many gods. A pirate would sink, not save, yon ship. By the act and the helmet on the mast I know a Roman. The victory is mine. Fortune hath not deserted me. We are saved. Wave thy hand—call to them—bring them quickly. I shall be duumvir, and thou!—I knew thy father, and loved him. He was a prince indeed. He taught me a Jew was not a barbarian. I will take thee with me. I will make thee my son. Give thy God thanks, and call the sailors. Haste! The pursuit must be kept. Not a robber shall escape. Hasten them!"

Judah raised himself upon the plank, and waved his hand, and called with all his might; at last he drew the attention of

the sailors in the small boat, and they were speedily taken up.

Arrius was received on the galley with all the honours due a hero so the favourite of Fortune. Upon a couch on the deck he heard the particulars of the conclusion of the fight. When the survivors afloat upon the water were all saved and the prize secured, he spread his flag of commandant anew, and hurried northward to rejoin the fleet and perfect the victory. In due time the fifty vessels coming down the channel closed in upon the fugitive pirates, and crushed them utterly; not one escaped. To swell the tribune's glory, twenty galleys of the enemy were captured.

Upon his return from the cruise, Arrius had warm welcome on the mole at Misenum. The young man attending him very early attracted the attention of his friends there; and to their questions as to who he was the tribune proceeded in the most affectionate manner to tell the story of his rescue and introduce the stranger, omitting carefully all that pertained to the latter's previous history. At the end of the narrative, he called Ben-Hur to him, and said, with a hand resting affectionately upon his shoulder:

"Good friends, this is my son and heir, who, as he is to take my property—if it be the will of the gods that I leave any—shall be known to you by my name. I pray you all to love him as you love me."

Speedily as opportunity permitted, the adoption was formally perfected. And in such manner the brave Roman kept his faith with Ben-Hur, giving him happy introduction into the imperial world.



Death in the Heather

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

DAVID BALFOUR had been kidnapped, an event which resulted in his meeting Alan Breck, a Jacobite who had "taken to the heather", in the phrase of the day following the failure of Prince Charles Edward in the rising of the Forty-five. Separated from his new-found friend, David is on the point of rejoining him when he comes upon some strangers, one of whom is the notorious Colin Roy Campbell, known throughout the Highlands as the Red Fox. They are talking when there is a musket shot, and the Red Fox falls, dying. David takes off after the marksman, but his action is misinterpreted by the dead Campbell's companion, and within seconds David finds himself a fugitive. That is when Alan Breck reappears to save him from capture. After which David has a straight question to ask his friend, one which receives a straight answer. David and Alan

have to share a number of other exciting adventures before the former returns to his home, as related in *Kidnapped*, from which this story is taken.

Mr. Henderland found for me a man who had a boat of his own and was to cross the Linnhe Loch that afternoon into Appin, fishing. Him he prevailed on to take me, for he was one of his flock; and in this way I saved a long day's travel and the price of two public ferries I must otherwise have passed.

It was near noon before we set out; a dark day with clouds, and the sun shining upon little patches. The sea was here very deep and still, and had scarce a wave upon it; so that I must put the water to my lips before I could believe it to be truly salt. The mountains on either side were high, rough and barren, very black and gloomy in the shadow of the clouds, but all silver-laced with little watercourses where the sun shone upon them. It seemed a hard country, this of Appin, for people to care as much about as Alan did.

There was but one thing to mention. A little after we had started, the sun shone upon a little moving clump of scarlet close in along the waterside to the north. It was much of the same red as soldier's coats; every now and then, too, there came little sparks and lightnings, as though the sun had struck upon bright steel.

I asked my boatman what it should be; and he answered he supposed it was some of the red soldiers coming from Fort William into Appin, against the poor tenantry of the country. Well, it was a sad sight to me; and whether it was because of my thoughts of Alan, or from something prophetic in my bosom, although this was but the second time I had seen King George's troops, I had no good will to them.

At last we came so near the point of land at the entering in of Loch Leven that I begged to be set on shore. My boatman (who was an honest fellow and mindful of his promise to the catechist) would fain have carried me on to Balachulish; but as this was to take me farther from my secret destination, I insisted, and was set on shore at last under the wood of Lettermore (or Lettermore, for I have heard it both ways) in Alan's country of Appin.

This was a wood of birches, growing on a steep, craggy side

of a mountain that overhung the loch. It had many openings and ferny howes; and a road or bridle track ran north and south through the midst of it, by the edge of which where was a spring, I sat down to eat some oat-bread of Mr. Henderland's, and think upon my situation.

Here I was not only troubled by a cloud of stinging midges, but far more by the doubts of my mind. What I ought to do, why I was going to join myself with an outlaw and a would-be murderer like Alan, whether I should not be acting more like a man of sense to tramp back to the south country direct, by my own guidance and at my own charges, and what Mr. Campbell or even Mr. Henderland would think of me if they should ever learn my folly and presumption: these were the doubts that now began to come in on me stronger than ever.

As I was so sitting and thinking, a sound of men and horses came to me through the wood; and presently after, at a turning of the road, I saw four travellers come into view. The way was in this part so rough and narrow that they came single and led their horses by the reins. The first was a great, red-headed gentleman, of an imperious and flushed face, who carried his hat in his hand and fanned himself, for he was in a breathing heat. The second, by his decent black garb and white wig, I correctly took to be a lawyer. The third was a servant, and wore some part of his clothes in tartan, which showed that his master was of a Highland family, and either an outlaw or else in singular good odour with the Government, since the wearing of tartan was against the Act. If I had been better versed in these things, I would have known the tartan to be of the Argyle (or Campbell) colours. This servant had a good-sized port-manteau strapped on his horse, and a net of lemons (to brew punch with) hanging at the saddle-bow; as was often enough the custom with luxurious travellers in that part of the country.

As for the fourth, who brought up the tail, I had seen his like before, and knew him at once to be a sheriff's officer.

I had no sooner seen these people coming than I made up my mind (for no reason that I can tell) to go through with my adventure; and when the first came alongside of me, I rose up from the bracken and asked him the way to Aucharn.

He stopped and looked at me, as I thought, a little oddly;

and then, turning to the lawyer, "Mungo," said he, "there's many a man would think this more of a warning than two pyats. Here am I on my road to Duror on the job ye ken; and here is a young lad starts up out of the bracken, and speers if I am on the way to Aucharn."

"Glenure," said the other, "this is an ill subject for jesting."

These two had now drawn close up and were gazing at me, while the two followers had halted about a stone-cast in the rear.

"And what seek ye in Aucharn?" said Colin Roy Campbell of Glenure; him they called the "Red Fox"; for he it was that I had stopped.

"The man that lives there," said I.

"James of the Glens," says Glenure, musingly; and then to the lawyer: "Is he gathering his people, think ye?"

"Anyway," says the lawyer, "we shall do better to bide where we are, and let the soldiers rally us."

"If you are concerned for me," said I, "I am neither of his people nor yours, but an honest subject of King George, owing no man and fearing no man."

"Why, very well said," replies the Factor. "But if I may make so bold as ask, what does this honest man so far from his country? and why does he come seeking the brother of Ardshiel? I have power here, I must tell you. I am King's Factor upon several of these estates, and have twelve files of soldiers at my back."

"I have heard a waif word in the country," said I, a little nettled, "that you were a hard man to drive."

He still kept looking at me, as if in doubt.

"Well," said he, at last, "your tongue is bold; but I am no unfriend to plainness. If ye had asked me the way to the door of James Stewart on any other day but this, I would have set ye right and bidden ye God speed. But to-day—eh, Mungo?" And he turned again to look at the lawyer.

But just as he turned there came the shot of a firelock from higher up the hill; and with the very sound of it Glenure fell upon the road.

"O, I am dead!" he cried, several times over.

The lawyer had caught him up and held him in his arms, the

servant standing over and clasping his hands. And now the wounded man looked from one to another with scared eyes, and there was a change in his voice that went to the heart.

"Take care of yourselves," says he. "I am dead."

He tried to open his clothes as if to look for the wound, but his fingers slipped on the buttons. With that he gave a great sigh, his head rolled on his shoulder, and he passed away.

The lawyer said never a word, but his face was as sharp as a pen and as white as the dead man's; the servant broke out into a great noise of crying and weeping, like a child; and I, on my side, stood staring at them in a kind of horror. The sheriff's officer had run back at the first sound of the shot, to hasten the coming of the soldiers.

At last the lawyer laid down the dead man in his blood upon the road, and got to his own feet with a kind of stagger.

I believe it was his movement that brought me to my senses; for he had no sooner done so than I began to scramble up the hill, crying out, "The murderer! the murderer!"

So little a time had elapsed, that when I got to the top of the first steepness, and could see some part of the open mountain, the murderer was still moving away at no great distance. He was a big man, in a black coat, with metal buttons, and carried a long fowling-piece.

"Here!" I cried. "I see him!"

At that the murderer gave a little, quick look over his shoulder, and began to run. The next moment he was lost in a fringe of birches; then he came out again on the upper side, where I could see him climbing like a jackanapes, for that part was again very steep; and then he dipped behind a boulder, and I saw him no more.

All this time I had been running on my side, and had got a good way up, when a voice cried upon me to stand.

I was at the edge of the upper wood, and so now, when I halted and looked back, I saw all the open part of the hill below me.

The lawyer and the sheriff's officer were standing just above the road, crying and waving on me to come back; and on their left, the red-coats, musket in hand, were beginning to struggle singly out of the lower wood.

"Why should I come back?" I cried. "Come you on!"

"Ten pounds if ye take that lad!" cried the lawyer. "He's an accomplice. He was posted here to hold us in talk."

At that word (which I could hear quite plainly, though it was to the soldiers and not to me that he was crying it) my heart came in my mouth with quite a new kind of terror. Indeed, it is one thing to stand the danger of your life, and quite another to run the peril of both life and character. The thing, besides, had come so suddenly, like thunder out of a clear sky, that I was all amazed and helpless.

The soldiers began to spread, some of them to run, and others to put up their pieces and cover me; and still I stood.

"Jouk in here among the trees," said a voice close by.

Indeed, I scarce knew what I was doing, but I obeyed; and as I did so, I heard the firelocks bang and the balls whistle in the birches.

Just inside the shelter of the trees I found Alan Breck standing, with a fishing-rod. He gave me no salutation; indeed it was no time for civilities; only "Come!" says he, and set off running along the side of the mountain towards Balachulish; and I, like a sheep, to follow him.

Now we ran among the birches; now stooping behind low humps upon the mountain side; now crawling on all fours among the heather. The pace was deadly: my heart seemed bursting against my ribs; and I had neither time to think nor breath to speak with. Only I remember seeing with wonder, that Alan every now and then would straighten himself to his full height and look back; and every time he did so, there came a great faraway cheering and crying of the soldiers.

Quarter of an hour later, Alan stopped, clapped down flat in the heather, and turned to me.

"Now," said he, "it's earnest. Do as I do, for your life."

And at the same speed, but now with infinitely more precaution, we traced back again across the mountain side by the same way that we had come, only perhaps higher; till at last Alan threw himself down in the upper wood of Lettermore, where I had found him at the first, and lay, with his face in the bracken, panting like a dog.

My own sides so ached, my head so swam, my tongue so

hung out of my mouth with heat and dryness, that I lay beside him like one dead.

Alan was the first to come round. He rose, went to the border of the wood, peered out a little, and then returned and sat down.

"Well," said he, "yon was a hot burst, David."

I said nothing, nor so much as lifted my face. I had seen murder done, and a great, ruddy, jovial gentleman struck out of life in a moment; the pity of that sight was still sore within me, and yet that was but a part of my concern. Here was murder done upon the man Alan hated; here was Alan skulking in the trees and running from the troops; and whether his was the hand that fired or only the head that ordered, signified but little. By my way of it, my only friend in that wild country was blood-guilty in the first degree; I held him in horror; I could not look upon his face; I would have rather lain alone in the rain on my cold isle than in that warm wood beside a murderer.

"Are ye still wearied?" he asked again.

"No," said I, still with my face in the bracken; "no, I am not wearied now, and I can speak. You and me must twine," I said. "I liked you very well, Alan, but your ways are not mine, and they're not God's: and the short and the long of it is just that we must twine."

"I will hardly twine from ye, David, without some kind of reason for the same," said Alan, mighty gravely. "If ye ken anything against my reputation, it's the least thing that ye should do, for old acquaintance' sake, to let me hear the name of it; and if ye have only taken a distaste to my society, it will be proper for me to judge if I'm insulted."

"Alan," said I, "what is the sense of this? Ye ken very well yon Campbellman lies in his blood upon the road."

He was silent for a little; then says he, "Did ever ye hear tell of the story of the Man and the Good People?"—by which he meant the fairies.

"No," said I, "nor do I want to hear it."

"With your permission, Mr. Balfour, I will tell it you, whatever," says Alan. "The man, ye should ken, was cast upon a rock in the sea, where it appears the Good People were in use to come and rest as they went through to Ireland. The name of this rock is called the Skerryvore, and it's not far from where we

suffered shipwreck. Well, it seems the man cried so sore, if he could just see his little bairn before he died! that at last the king of the Good People took peety upon him, and sent one flying that brought back the bairn in a poke and laid it down beside the man where he lay sleeping. So when the man awoke, there was a poke beside him and something into the inside of it that moved. Well, it seems he was one of these gentry that think aye the worst of things; and for greater security, he stuck his dirk throughout that poke before he opened it, and there was his bairn dead. I am thinking to myself, Mr. Balfour, that you and the man are very much alike."

"Do you mean you had no hand in it?" cried I, sitting up.

"I will tell you first of all, Mr. Balfour of Shaws, as one friend to another," said Alan, "that if I were going to kill a gentleman, it would not be in my own country, to bring trouble on my clan; and I would not go wanting sword and gun, and with a long fishing-rod upon my back."

"Well," said I, "that's true!"

"And now," continued Alan, taking out his dirk and laying his hand upon it in a certain manner, "I swear upon the Holy Iron I had neither art, nor part, act, nor thought in it."

"I thank God for that!" cried I, and offered him my hand.



On Jackson's Island

MARK TWAIN

HUCKLEBERRY FINN, the immortal friend of Tom Sawyer, decides to escape from his father, who keeps him confined in a riverside shanty. However, he knows that he must make his departure appear more final than it really is, so he lays a trail to make his father and other folk believe he has been killed and his body dumped in the river. He does this with great cunning, and then makes for Jackson's Island, which is to be his secret sanctuary. He even enjoys the knowledge that people are dragging the river for him. But on the island he gets a shock, and so does someone else, who at first sight of Huck believes he is a ghost. Huck has a life full of escapades and adventures, and a great many of them are related in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, from which this story is taken.

"Git up! what you 'bout?"

I opened my eyes and looked around, trying to make out where I was. It was after sun-up, and I had been sound asleep. Pap was standing over me, looking sour—and sick, too. He says—

"What you doin' with this gun?"

I judged he didn't know nothing about what he had been doing, so I says:

"Somebody tried to get in, so I was laying for him."

"Why didn't you roust me out?"

"Well, I tried to, but I couldn't; I couldn't budge you."

"Well, all right. Don't stand there palavering all day, but out with you and see if there's a fish on the lines for breakfast. I'll be along in a minute."

He unlocked the door and I cleared out, up the river bank. I noticed some pieces of limbs and such things floating down, and a sprinkling of bark; so I knowed the river had begun to rise. I reckoned I would have great times, now, if I was over at the town. The June rise used to be always luck for me; because as soon as that rise begins, here comes cord-wood floating down, and pieces of log rafts—sometimes a dozen logs together; so all you have to do is to catch them and sell them to the wood yards and the sawmill.

I went along up the bank with one eye out for pap and t'other one out for what the rise might fetch along. Well, all at once, here comes a canoe; just a beauty, too, about thirteen or fourteen foot long, riding high like a duck. I shot head first off of the bank, like a frog, clothes and all on, and struck out for the canoe. I just expected there'd be somebody laying down in it, because people often done that to fool folks, and when a chap had pulled a skiff out most to it they'd rise up and laugh at him. But it warn't so this time. It was a drift canoe, sure enough, and I clumb in and paddled her ashore. Thinks I, the old man will be glad when he sees this—she's worth ten dollars. But when I got to shore pap wasn't in sight yet, and as I was running her into a little creek like a gully, all hung over with vines and willows, I struck another idea; I judged I'd hide her good, and then, stead of taking to the woods when I run off, I'd go down the river about fifty mile and camp in one place for good, and not have such a rough time tramping on foot.

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I took the sack of corn meal and took it to where the canoe was hid, and shoved the vines and branches apart and put it in; then I done the same with the side of bacon; then the whisky jug; I took all the coffee and sugar there was, and all the ammunition; I took the wadding; I took the bucket and gourd, I took a dipper and a tin cup, and my old saw and two blankets, and the skillet and the coffee-pot. I took fish-lines and matches and other things—everything that was worth a cent. I cleaned out the place. I wanted an axe, but there wasn't any, only the one out at the wood pile, and I knowed why I was going to leave that. I fetched out the gun, and now I was done.

It was all grass clear to the canoe; so I hadn't left a track. I followed around to see. I stood on the bank and looked out over the river. All safe. So I took the gun and went up a piece into the woods and was hunting around for some birds, when I see a wild pig; hogs soon went wild in them bottoms after they had got away from the prairie farms. I shot this fellow and took him into camp.

I took the axe and smashed in the door. I beat it and hacked it considerable, a-doing it. I fetched the pig in and took him back nearly to the table and hacked into his throat with the axe, and laid him down on the ground to bleed—I say ground, because it *was* ground—hard packed, and no boards. Well, next I took an old sack and put a lot of big rocks in it—all I could drag—and I started it from the pig and dragged it to the door and through the woods down to the river and dumped it in, and down it sunk, out of sight. You could easy see that something had been dragged over the ground. I did wish Tom Sawyer was there, I knowed he would take an interest in this kind of business, and throw in the fancy touches. Nobody could spread himself like Tom Sawyer in such a thing as that.

Well, last I pulled out some of my hair, and bloodied the axe good, and stuck it on the back side, and slung the axe in the corner. Then I took up the pig and held him to my breast with my jacket (so he couldn't drip) till I got a good piece below the house and then dumped him into the river. Now I thought of something else. So I went and got the bag of meal and my old saw out of the canoe and fetched them to the house. I took the bag to where it used to stand, and ripped a hole in the bottom

of it with the saw, for there warn't no knives and forks on the place—pap done everything with his clasp-knife, about the cooking. Then I carried the sack about a hundred yards across the grass and through the willows east of the house, to a shallow lake that was five miles wide and full of rushes—and ducks too, you might say, in the season. There was a slough or a creek leading out of it on the other side, that went miles away, I don't know where, but it didn't go to the river. The meal sifted out and made a little track all the way to the lake. I dropped pap's whetstone there too, so as to look like it had been done by accident. Then I tied up the rip in the meal sack with a string, so it wouldn't leak no more, and took it and my saw to the canoe again.

It was about dark now; so I dropped the canoe down the river under some willows that hung over the bank, and waited for the moon to rise. I made fast to a willow; then I took a bite to eat, and by-and-by laid down in the canoe to smoke a pipe and lay out a plan. I says to myself, they'll follow the track of that sackful of rocks to the shore and then drag the river for me. And they'll follow that meal track to the lake and go browsing down the creek that leads out of it to find the robbers that killed me and took the things. They won't ever hunt the river for anything but my dead carcass. They'll soon get tired of that, and won't bother no more about me. All right; I can stop anywhere I want to. Jackson's Island is good enough for me; I know that island pretty well, and nobody ever comes there. And then I can paddle over to town, nights, and slink around and pick up things I want. Jackson's Island's the place.

I was pretty tired, and the first thing I knowed, I was asleep. When I woke up I didn't know where I was, for a minute. I set up and looked around, a little scared. Then I remembered. The river looked miles and miles across. The moon was so bright I could a counted the drift logs that went a slipping along, black and still, hundreds of yards out from shore. Everything was dead quiet, and it looked late, and *smelt* late. You know what I mean—I don't know the words to put it in.

I didn't lose no time. The next minute I was a-spinning down stream soft but quick in the shade of the bank. I made two mile and a half, and then struck out a quarter of a mile or

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more towards the middle of the river, because pretty soon I would be passing the ferry landing and people might see me and hail me. I got out amongst the drift-wood and then laid down in the bottom of the canoe and let her float.

I was away below the ferry now. I rose up and there was Jackson's Island, about two mile and a half down stream, heavy-timbered and standing up out of the middle of the river, big and dark and solid, like a steamboat without any lights. There warn't any signs of the bar at the head—it was all under water now.

It didn't take me long to get there. I shot past the head at a ripping rate, the current was so swift, and then I got into the dead water and landed on the side toward the Illinois shore. I run the canoe into a deep dent in the bank that I knowed about; I had to part the willow branches to get in; and when I made fast nobody could a seen the canoe from the outside.

I went up and set down on a log at the head of the island and looked out on the big river and the black drift-wood, and away over to the town, three mile away, where there was three or four lights twinkling. A monstrous big lumber raft was about a mile up stream, coming along down, with a lantern in the middle of it. I watched it come creeping down, and when it was most abreast of where I stood I heard a man say, "Stern oars, there! heave her head to stabboard!" I heard that just as plain as if the man was by my side.

There was a little grey in the sky, now; so I stepped into the woods and laid down for a nap before breakfast.

The sun was up so high when I waked, that I judged it was after eight o'clock. I laid there in the grass and the cool shade, thinking about things and feeling rested and ruther comfortable and satisfied. I could see the sun out at one or two holes, but mostly it was big trees all about, and gloomy in there amongst them. There was freckled places on the ground where the light sifted down through the leaves, and the freckled places swapped about a little, showing there was a little breeze up there. A couple of squirrels set on a limb and jabbered at me very friendly.

I was powerful lazy and comfortable—didn't want to get up and cook breakfast. Well, I was dozing off again, when I thinks

I hears a deep sound of "boom!" away up the river. I rouses up and rests on my elbow and listens; pretty soon I hears it again. I hopped up and went and looked out at a hole in the leaves, and I see a bunch of smoke laying on the water a long ways up—about abreast the ferry. And there was the ferry-boat full of people, floating along down. I knowed what was the matter, now. "Boom!" I see the white smoke squirt out of the ferry-boat's side. You see, they was firing cannon over the water, trying to make my carcass come to the top.

I was pretty hungry, but it warn't going to do for me to start a fire, because they might see the smoke. So I set there and watched the cannon-smoke and listened to the boom. The river was a mile wide, there, and it always looks pretty on a summer morning—so I was having a good enough time seeing them hunt for my remainders, if I only had a bite to eat. Well, then I happened to think how they always put quicksilver in loaves of bread and float them off because they always go right to the drowned carcass and stop there. So says I, I'll keep a look-out, and if any of them's floating around after me, I'll give them a show. I changed to the Illinois edge of the island to see what luck I could have, and I warn't disappointed. A big double loaf come along, and I most got it, with a long stick, but my foot slipped and she floated out further. Of course I was where the current set in the closest to the shore—I knowed enough for that. But by-and-by along comes another one, and this time I won. I took out the plug and shook out the little dab of quicksilver, and set my teeth in. It was "baker's bread"—what the quality eat—none of your low-down corn-pone.

I got a good place amongst the leaves, and set there on a log, munching the bread and watching the ferry-boat, and very well satisfied. And then something struck me. I says, now I reckon the widow or the parson or somebody prayed that this bread would find me, and here it has gone and done it. So there ain't no doubt but there is something in that thing. That is, there's something in it when a body like the widow or the parson prays, but it don't work for me, and I reckon it don't work for only just the right kind.

I lit a pipe and had a good long smoke and went on watching. The ferry-boat was floating with the current, and I allowed I'd

have a chance to see who was aboard when she come along, because she would come in close, where the bread did. When she'd got pretty well along down towards me, I put out my pipe and went to where I fished out the bread, and laid down behind a log on the bank in a little open place. Where the log forked I could peep through.

By-and-by she come along, and she drifted in so close that they could a run out a plank and walked ashore. Most everybody was on the boat. Pap, and Judge Thatcher, and Bessie Thatcher, and Jo Harper, and Tom Sawyer, and his old Aunt Polly, and Sid and Mary, and plenty more. Everybody was talking about the murder, but the captain broke in and says:

"Look sharp, now; the current sets in the closest there, and maybe he's washed ashore and got tangled amongst the brush at the water's edge. I hope so, anyway."

I didn't hope so. They all crowded up and leaned over the rails, nearly in my face, and kept still, watching with all their might. I could see them first-rate, but they couldn't see me. Then the captain sung out:

"Stand away!" and the cannon let off such a blast right before me that it made me deaf with the noise and pretty near blind with the smoke, and I judged I was gone. If they'd a had some bullets in, I reckon they'd a got the corpse they was after. Well, I see I warn't hurt, thanks to goodness. The boat floated on and went out of sight around the shoulder of the island. I could hear the booming, now and then, further and further off, and by-and-by after an hour, I didn't hear it no more. The island was three mile long. I judged they had got to the foot, and was giving it up. But they didn't yet a-while. They turned around the foot of the island and started up the channel on the Missouri side, under steam, and booming once in a while as they went. I crossed over to that side and watched them. When they got abreast the head of the island they quit shooting and dropped over to the Missouri shore and went home to the town.

I knowed I was all right now. Nobody else would come a-hunting after me. I got my traps out of the canoe and made me a nice camp in the thick woods. I made a kind of a tent out of my blankets to put my things under so the rain couldn't get at

them. I caught a cat-fish and haggled him open with my saw, and towards sundown I started my camp fire and had supper. Then I set out a line to catch some fish for breakfast.

When it was dark I set by my camp fire smoking, and feeling pretty satisfied; but by-and-by it got sort of lonesome, and so I went and set on the bank and listened to the currents washing along, and counted the stars and drift-logs and rafts that come down, and then went to bed; there ain't no better way to put in time when you are lonesome; you can't stay so, you soon get over it.

And so for three days and nights. No difference—just the same thing. But the next day I went exploring around down through the island. I was boss of it; it all belonged to me, so to say, and I wanted to know all about it; but mainly I wanted to put in the time. I found plenty strawberries, ripe and prime; and green summer-grapes, and green razberries; and the green blackberries was just beginning to show. They would all come handy by-and-by, I judged.

Well, I went fooling along in the deep woods till I judged I warn't far from the foot of the island. I had my gun along, but I hadn't shot nothing; it was for protection; thought I would kill some game nigh home. About this time I mighty near stepped on a good-sized snake, and it went sliding off through the grass and flowers, and I after it, trying to get a shot at it. I clipped along, and all of a sudden I bounded right on to the ashes of a camp fire that was still smoking.

My heart jumped up amongst my lungs. I never waited for to look further, but uncocked my gun and went sneaking back on my tip-toes as fast as ever I could. Every now and then I stopped a second, amongst the thick leaves, and listened; but my breath come so hard I couldn't hear nothing else. I slunk along another piece further, then listened again; and so on, and so on; if I see a stump, I took it for a man; if I trod on a stick and broke it, it made me feel like a person had cut one of my breaths in two and I only got half, and the short half, too.

When I got to camp I warn't feeling very brash, there warn't much sand in my craw; but I says, this ain't no time to be fooling around. So I got all my traps into my canoe again so as to have them out of sight, and I put out the fire and scattered

the ashes around to look like an old last year's camp, and then clumb a tree.

I reckon I was up in the tree two hours; but I didn't see ~~nothing~~, I didn't hear nothing—I only *thought* I heard and seen as much as a thousand things. Well, I couldn't stay up there for ever; so at last I got down, but I kept in the thick woods and on the look-out all the time. All I could get to eat was berries and what was left over from breakfast.

By the time it was night I was pretty hungry. So when it was good and dark, I slid out from shore before moonrise and paddled over to the Illinois bank—about a quarter of a mile. I went out in the woods and cooked a supper, and I had about made up my mind I would stay there all night, when I hear a *plunkety-plunk, plunkety-plunk*, and says to myself, horses coming; and next I hear people's voices. I got everything into the canoe as quick as I could, and then went creeping through the woods to see what I could find out. I hadn't got far when I hear a man say:

"We better camp here, if we can find a good place; the horses is about beat out. Let's look around."

I didn't wait, but shoved out and paddled away easy. I tied up in the old place, and reckoned I would sleep in the canoe.

I didn't sleep much. I couldn't, somehow, for thinking. And every time I waked up I thought somebody had me by the neck. So the sleep didn't do me no good. By-and-by I says to myself, I can't live this way; I'm agoing to find out who it is that's here on the island with me; I'll find it out or bust. Well, I felt better, right off.

So I took my paddle and slid out from shore just a step or two, and then let the canoe drop along down amongst the shadows. The moon was shining, and outside of the shadows it made it most as light as day. I poked along well on to an hour, everything still as rocks and sound asleep. Well, by this time I was most down to the foot of the island. A little ripply, cool breeze begun to blow, and that was as good as saying the night was about done. I give her a turn with the paddle and brung her nose to shore; then I got my gun and slipped out and into the edge of the woods. I set down there on a log and looked out

through the leaves. I see the moon go off watch and the darkness begin to blanket the river. But in a little while I see a pale streak over the tree-tops, and knowed the day was coming. So I took my gun and slipped off towards where I had run across that camp fire, stopping every minute or two to listen. But I hadn't no luck, somehow; I couldn't seem to find the place. But by-and-by, sure enough, I caught a glimpse of fire, away through the trees. I went for it, cautious and slow. By-and-by I was close enough to have a look, and there laid a man on the ground. It most give me the fan-tods. He had a blanket around his head, and his head was nearly in the fire. I set there behind a clump of bushes, in about six foot of him, and kept my eyes on him steady. It was getting grey daylight, now. Pretty soon he gapped, and stretched himself, and hove off the blanket, and it was Miss Watson's Jim! I bet I was glad to see him. I says:

"Hello, Jim!" and skipped out.

He bounced up and stared at me wild. Then he drops down on his knees, and puts his hands together and says:

"Doan' hurt me—don't! I hain't ever done no harm to a ghos'. I awluz liked dead people, en done all I could for 'em. You go en git in de river agin, whah you b'longs, en doan' do nuffn to Ole Jim, 'at 'uz awluz yo' fren'."

Well, I warn't long making him understand I warn't dead. I was ever so glad to see Jim. I warn't lonesome, now. I told him I warn't afraid of *him* telling the people where I was. I talked along, but he only set there and looked at me; never said nothing. Then I says:

"It's good daylight. Let's get breakfast. Make up your camp fire good."

"What's de use er makin' up de camp fire to cook strawbries en sich truck? But you got a gun, hain't you? Den we kin git sumfn' better den strawbries."

"Strawberries and such truck," I says. "Is that what you live on?"

"I couldn' git nuffn' else," he says.

"Why, how long you been on the island, Jim?"

"I come heah de night arter you's killed."

"What, all that time?"

"Yes-indeedy."

"And ain't you had nothing but that kind of rubbage to eat?"

"No, sah—nuffn' else."

"Well, you must be most starved, ain't you?"

"I reck'n I could eat a hoss. I think I could. How long you ben on de islan'?"

"Since the night I got killed."

"No! W'y, what has you lived on? But you got a gun? Oh, yes, you got a gun. Dat's good. Now you kill sumfn' en I'll make up de fire."

So we went over to where the canoe was, and while he built a fire in a grassy open place amongst the trees, I fetched meal and bacon and coffee, and coffee-pot and frying-pan, and sugar and tin cups, and the nigger was set back considerable, because he reckoned it was all done with witchcraft. I caught a good big cat-fish, too, and Jim cleaned him with his knife, and fried him.

When breakfast was ready, we lolled on the grass and eat it smoking hot; Jim laid it in with all his might, for he was most about starved. Then when we had got pretty well stuffed, we laid off and lazied.

By-and-by Jim says:

"But looky here, Huck, who wuz it dat'uz killed in dat shanty, ef it warn't you?"

Then I told him the whole thing, and he said it was smart. He said Tom Sawyer couldn't get up no better plan than what I had.



A Challenge Accepted

THOMAS HUGHES

WHEN Slogger Williams felt that a smaller boy in his form at Rugby was taking unfair advantage of his ability to swat he had one way of dealing with the situation—using his heavy hands. But the new boy Arthur's friend, Tom Brown, realized that Slogger had to be stood up to one day, and decided the day he clouted Arthur was as good as any. Whereupon Slogger, a bigger boy, challenged Tom to a fight, and Tom, no weakling himself, accepted, and that day the two entered upon a trial of strength that was to make history at Rugby. Tom and his friends at Rugby School live a thrilling life that is different in many ways from the lives lived by their descendants, but their exploits are related in *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, from which this tale of schoolboy high adventure is taken.

There is a certain sort of fellow, of whom you can predicate with almost positive certainty, after he has been a month at school, that he is sure to have a fight, and with almost equal certainty that he will have but one. Tom Brown was one of these.

It was not at all usual in those days for two Schoolhouse boys to have a fight. Of course there were exceptions, when some cross-grained hard-headed fellow came up who would never be happy unless he was quarrelling with his nearest neighbours, or when there was some class dispute, between the fifth form and the fags for instance, which required blood-letting; and a champion was picked out on each side tacitly, who settled the matter by a good hearty mill. But for the most part, the constant use of those surest keepers of the peace, the boxing-gloves, kept the Schoolhouse boys from fighting one another. Two or three nights in every week the gloves were brought out, either in the hall or fifth-form room; and every boy who was ever likely to fight at all knew all his neighbours' prowess perfectly well, and could tell to a nicety what chance he would have in a stand-up fight with any other boy in the house. But of course no such experience could be gotten as regarded boys in other houses; and as most of the other houses were more or less jealous of the Schoolhouse, collisions were frequent.

After all, what would life be without fighting, I should like to know? From the cradle to the grave, fighting, rightly understood, is the business, the real, highest, honestest business of every son of man. Everyone who is worth his salt has his enemies, who must be beaten, be they evil thoughts and habits in himself, or spiritual wickedness in high places, or Russians, or Border ruffians, or Bill, Tom, or Harry, who will not let him live his life in quiet till he has thrashed them.

It was drawing towards the close of Arthur's first half-year, and the May evenings were lengthening out. Locking-up was not till eight o'clock, and everybody was beginning to talk about what he would do in the holidays. The shell, in which form all our dramatis personæ now are, were reading amongst other things the last book of Homer's *Iliad*, and had worked through it as far as the speeches of the women over Hector's body. It is a whole schoolday, and four or five of the Schoolhouse boys (amongst whom are Arthur, Tom, and East) are preparing

third lesson together. They have finished the regulation forty lines, and are for the most part getting very tired, notwithstanding the exquisite pathos of Helen's lamentation. And now several long four-syllabled words came together, and the boy with the dictionary strikes work.

"I am not going to look out any more words," says he; "we've done the quantity. Ten to one we shan't get so far. Let's go out into the close."

"Come along, boys," cries East, always ready to leave the grind, as he called it; "our old coach is laid up, you know, and we shall have one of the new masters, who's sure to go slow and let us down easy."

So an adjournment to the close was carried *nem. con.*, little Arthur not daring to uplift his voice; but, being deeply interested in what they were reading, stayed quietly behind, and learnt on for his own pleasure.

As East had said, the regular master of the form was unwell, and they were to be heard by one of the new masters, quite a young man, who had only just left the university. Certainly it would be hard lines, if, by dawdling as much as possible in coming in and taking their places, entering into long-winded explanations of what was the usual course of the regular master of the form, and others of the stock contrivances of boys for wasting time in school, they could not spin out the lesson so that he should not work them through more than the forty lines; as to which quantity there was a perpetual fight going on between the master and his form, the latter insisting, and enforcing by passive resistance, that it was the prescribed quantity of Homer for a shell lesson, the former that there was no fixed quantity, but they must always be ready to go on to fifty or sixty lines if there were time within the hour. However, notwithstanding all their efforts, the new master got on horribly quick; he seemed to have the bad taste to be really interested in the lesson, and to be trying to work them up into something like appreciation of it, giving them good spirited English words, instead of the wretched bald stuff into which they rendered poor old Homer; and construing over each piece himself to them, after each boy, to show them how it should be done.

Now the clock strikes the three-quarters; there is only a

A Challenge Accepted

quarter of an hour more; but the forty lines are all but done. So the boys, one after another, who are called up, stick more and more, and make balder and even more bald work of it. The poor young master is pretty near beat by this time, and feels ready to knock his head against the wall, or his fingers against somebody else's head. So he gives up altogether the lower and middle parts of the form, and looks round in despair at the boys on the top bench, to see if there is one out of whom he can strike a spark or two, and who will be too chivalrous to murder the most beautiful utterances of the most beautiful woman of the old world. His eye rests on Arthur, and he calls him up to finish construing Helen's speech. Whereupon all the other boys draw long breaths, and begin to stare about and take it easy. They are all safe; Arthur is the head of the form and sure to be able to construe, and that will tide on safely till the hour strikes.

Arthur proceeds to read out the passage in Greek before construing it, as the custom is. Tom, who isn't paying much attention, is suddenly caught by the falter in his voice. He looks up at Arthur. "Why, bless us," thinks he, "what can be the matter with the young 'un? He's never going to get floored. He's sure to have learnt to the end." Next moment he is reassured by the spirited tone in which Arthur begins construing, and betakes himself to drawing dogs' heads in his notebook, while the master, evidently enjoying the change, turns his back on the middle bench and stands before Arthur, beating a sort of time with his hand and foot, and saying, "Yes, yes," "very well," as Arthur goes on.

But Tom catches that falter again and looks up. He sees that there is something the matter; Arthur can hardly get on at all. What can it be?

Suddenly at this point Arthur breaks down altogether, and fairly bursts out crying, and dashes the cuff of his jacket across his eyes, blushing up to the roots of his hair, and feeling as if he should like to go down suddenly through the floor. The whole form was taken aback; most of them stare stupidly at him, while those who are gifted with presence of mind find their places and look steadily at their books, in hopes of not catching the master's eye and getting called up in Arthur's place.

The master looks puzzled for a moment, and then seeing, as the fact is, that the boy is really affected to tears by the most

touching thing in Homer, perhaps in all profane poetry put together, steps up to him and lays his hand kindly on his shoulder, saying, "Never mind, my little man, you've construed very well. Stop a minute, there's no hurry."

Now, as luck would have it, there sat next above Tom on that day, in the middle bench of the form, a big boy, by name Slogger Williams, from the force with which it was supposed he could hit. In the main he was a rough good-natured fellow enough, but very much alive to his own dignity. He had already grunted and grumbled to himself when Arthur went on reading beyond the forty lines. But now that he had broken down just in the middle of all the long words, the Slogger's wrath was fairly roused.

"Sneaking little brute," muttered he, regardless of prudence, "clapping on the waterworks just in the hardest place; see if I don't punch his head after fourth lesson."

"No, you shan't," said Tom.

"Hullo!" exclaimed Williams, looking at Tom with great surprise for a moment, and then giving him a sudden dig in the ribs with his elbow, which sent Tom's books flying on to the floor, and called the attention of the master, who turned suddenly round, and seeing the state of things said—

"Williams, go down three places."

Another hour was occupied in preparing and saying fourth lesson, during which Williams was bottling up his wrath; and when five struck, and the lessons for the day were over, he prepared to take summary vengeance on the innocent cause of his misfortune.

Tom was detained in school a few minutes after the rest, and on coming out of the quadrangle, the first thing he saw was a small ring of boys, applauding Williams, who was holding Arthur by the collar.

"There, you young sneak," said he, giving Arthur a cuff on the head with his other hand.

"Hullo!" said Tom, shouldering into the crowd, "you drop that, Williams; you shan't touch him."

"Who'll stop me?" said the Slogger, raising his hand again.

"I," said Tom; and suiting the action to the word, struck the arm which held Arthur's arm so sharply that the Slogger dropped it with a start, and turned the full current of his wrath on Tom.

"Will you fight?"

"Yes, of course."

"Hurrah, there's going to be a fight between Slogger Williams and Tom Brown."

The news ran like wildfire about, and many boys who were on their way to tea at their several houses turned back, and sought the back of the chapel, where the fights come off.

"Just run and tell East to come and back me," said Tom to a small Schoolhouse boy, who was off like a rocket to Harrowell's, just stopping for a moment to poke his head into the Schoolhouse hall, where the lower boys were already at tea, and sing out, "Fight! Tom Brown and Slogger Williams."

Up start half the boys at once, leaving bread, eggs, butter, sprats, and all the rest to take care of themselves. The greater part of the remainder follow in a minute, after swallowing their tea, carrying their food in their hands to consume as they go. Three or four only remain, who steal the butter of the more impetuous, and make to themselves an unctuous feast.

In another minute East and Martin tear through the quadrangle, carrying a sponge, and arrive at the scene of action just as the combatants are beginning to strip.

Tom felt he had got his work cut out for him, as he stripped off his jacket, waistcoat, and braces. East tied his handkerchief round his waist, and rolled up his shirt-sleeves for him: "Now, old boy, don't you open your mouth to say a word, or try to help yourself a bit, we'll do all that; you keep all your breath and strength for the Slogger." Martin meanwhile folded the clothes, and put them under the chapel rails; and now Tom, with East to handle him and Martin to give him a knee, steps out on the turf, and is ready for all that may come: and here is the Slogger too, all stripped, and thirsting for the fray.

It doesn't look a fair match at first glance: Williams is nearly two inches taller and probably a long year older than his opponent, and he is very strongly made about the arms and shoulders; "peels well", as the little knot of big fifth-form boys, the amateurs, say; who stand outside the ring of little boys, looking complacently on, but taking no active part in the proceedings. But down below he is not so good by any means; no spring from the loins, and feebleish, not to say shipwrecky, about

the knees. Tom, on the contrary, though not half so strong in the arms, is good all over, straight, hard, and springy, from neck to ankle, better perhaps in his legs than anywhere. Besides, you can see by the clear white of his eye and fresh bright look of his skin, that he is in tiptop training, able to do all he knows; while the Slogger looks rather sodden, as if he didn't take much exercise and ate too much tuck. The time-keeper is chosen, a large ring made, and the two stand up opposite one another for a moment, giving us time just to make our little observations.

"If Tom'll only condescend to fight with his head and heels," as East mutters to Martin, "we shall do."

But seemingly he won't, for there he goes in, making play with both hands. Hard all, is the word; the two stand to one another like men; rally follows rally in quick succession, each fighting as if he thought to finish the whole thing out of hand. "Can't last at this rate," say the knowing ones, while the partisans of each make the air ring with their shouts and counter-shouts of encouragement, approval, and defiance.

"Take it easy, take it easy—keep away, let him come after you," implores East, as he wipes Tom's face after the first round with wet sponge, while he sits back on Martin's knee.

"Time's up," calls the timekeeper.

"There he goes again, hang it all!" growls East, as his man is at it again as hard as ever. A very severe round follows, in which Tom gets out-and-out the worst of it, and is at last hit clean off his legs, and deposited on the grass by a right-hander from the Slogger.

Loud shouts rise from the boys of Slogger's house, and the Schoolhouse are silent and vicious, ready to pick quarrels anywhere.

"Two to one in half-crowns on the big 'un," says Rattle, one of the amateurs, a tall fellow, in thunder-and-lightning waistcoat, and puffy good-natured face.

"Done!" says Groove, another amateur of quieter look, taking out his notebook to enter it, for our friend Rattle sometimes forgets these little things.

Meantime East is freshening up Tom with the sponge for next round, and has set two other boys to rub his hands.

"Tom, old boy," whispers he, "this may be fun for you, but

it's death to me. He'll hit all the fight out of you in another five minutes, and then I shall go and drown myself in the island ditch. Feint him—use your legs! draw him about! he'll lose his wind then in no time, and you can go into him. Hit at his body too; we'll take care of his frontispiece by and by."

Tom felt the wisdom of the counsel, and saw already that he couldn't go in and finish the Slogger off at mere hammer and tongs, so changed his tactics completely in the third round. He now fights cautious, getting away from and parrying the Slogger's lunging hits instead of trying to counter, and leading his enemy a dance all round the ring after him. "He's funking; go in, Williams," "Catch him up," "Finish him off," scream the small boys of the Slogger party.

"Just what we want," thinks East, chuckling to himself, as he sees Williams, excited by these shouts, and thinking the game in his own hands, blowing himself in his exertions to get to close quarters again, while Tom is keeping away with perfect ease.

They quarter over the ground again and again, Tom always on the defensive.

The Slogger pulls up at last for a moment, fairly blown.

"Now then, Tom," sings out East, dancing with delight. Tom goes in in a twinkling, and hits two heavy body blows, and gets away again before the Slogger can catch his wind; which when he does he rushes with blind fury at Tom, and being skilfully parried and avoided, overreaches himself and falls on his face, amidst terrific cheers from the Schoolhouse boys.

"Double your two to one?" says Groove to Rattle, notebook in hand.

"Stop a bit," says that hero, looking uncomfortably at Williams, who is puffing away on his second's knee, winded enough, but little the worse in any other way.

After another round the Slogger too seems to see that he can't go in and win right off, and has met his match or thereabouts. So he too begins to use his head, and tries to make Tom lose patience, and come in before his time. And so the fight sways on, now one and now the other getting a trifling pull.

Tom's face begins to look very onesided—there are little queer bumps on his forehead, and his mouth is bleeding; but East keeps the wet sponge going so scientifically, that he comes

up looking as fresh and bright as ever. Williams is only slightly marked in the face, but by the nervous movement of his elbows you can see that Tom's body blows are telling. In fact half the vice of the Slogger's hitting is neutralized, for he daren't lunge out freely for fear of exposing his sides. It is too interesting by this time for much shouting, and the whole ring is very quiet.

"All right, Tommy," whispers East; "hold on's the horse that's to win. We've got the last. Keep your head, old boy."

But where is Arthur all this time? Words cannot paint the poor little fellow's distress. He couldn't muster courage to come up to the ring, but wandered up and down from the great fives-court to the corner of the chapel rails. Now trying to make up his mind to throw himself between them, and try to stop them; then thinking of running in and telling his friend Mary, who he knew would instantly report to the Doctor. The stories he had heard of men being killed in prize fights rose up horridly before him.

Once only, when the shouts of "Well done, Brown!" "Huzza for the Schoolhouse!" rose higher than ever, he ventured up to the ring, thinking the victory was won. Catching sight of Tom's face in the state I have described, all fear of consequences vanishing out of his mind, he rushed straight off to the matron's room, beseeching her to get the fight stopped, or he shall die.

But it's time for us to get back to the close. What is this fierce tumult and confusion? The ring is broken, and high and angry words are being bandied about; "It's all fair," "It isn't," "No hugging;" the fight is stopped. The combatants, however, sit there quietly, tended by their seconds, while their adherents wrangle in the middle. East can't help shouting challenges to two or three of the other side, though he never leaves Tom for a moment, and plies the sponges as fast as ever.

The fact is, that at the end of the last round, Tom seeing a good opening had closed with his opponent, and after a moment's struggle had thrown him heavily, by help of the fall he had learnt from his village rival in the Vale of White Horse. Williams hadn't the ghost of a chance with Tom at wrestling; and the conviction broke at once on the Slogger faction, that if this were allowed their man must be licked. There was a strong feeling in the school against catching hold and throwing,

though it was generally ruled all fair within certain limits; so the ring was broken and the fight stopped.

The Schoolhouse are overruled—the fight is on again, but there is to be no throwing; and East in high wrath threatens to take his man away after next round (which he don't mean to do, by the way), when suddenly young Brooke comes through the small gate at the end of the chapel. The Schoolhouse faction rush to him. "Oh, hurrah! now we shall get fair play."

"Please, Brooke, come up, they won't let Tom Brown throw him."

"Throw whom?" says Brooke, coming up to the ring. "Oh! Williams, I see. Nonsense! of course he may throw him if he catches fairly above the waist."

Now, young Brooke, you're in the sixth, you know, and you ought to stop all fights. He looks hard at both boys. "Anything wrong?" says he to East, nodding at Tom.

"Not a bit."

"Not beat at all?"

"Bless you, no! heaps of fight in him. Ain't there, Tom?"

Tom looks at Brooke and grins.

"How's he?" nodding at Williams.

"So, so; rather done, I think, since his last fall. He won't stand above two more."

"Time's up!" the boys rise again and face one another. Brooke can't find it in his heart to stop them just yet, so the round goes on, the Slogger waiting for Tom, and reserving all his strength to hit him out should he come in for the wrestling dodge again, for he feels that that must be stopped, or his sponge will soon go up in the air.

And now another newcomer appears on the field, to wit the under porter, with his long brush and great wooden receptacle for dust under his arm. He has been sweeping out the schools.

"You'd better stop, gentlemen," he says; "the Doctor knows that Brown's fighting—he'll be out in a minute."

"You go to Bath, Bill," is all that excellent servitor gets by his advice. And being a man of his hands, and a staunch upholder of the Schoolhouse, can't help stopping to look on for a bit, and see Tom Brown, their pet craftsman, fight a round.

It is grim earnest, and no mistake. Both boys feel this, and

summon every power of head, hand, and eye to their aid. A piece of luck on either side, a foot slipping, a blow getting well home, or another fall, may decide it. Tom works slowly round for an opening, he has all the legs, and can choose his own time; the Slogger waits for the attack and hopes to finish it by some heavy right-handed blow. As they quarter slowly over the ground, the evening sun comes out from behind a cloud and falls full on Williams's face. Tom darts in, the heavy right-hand is delivered but only grazes his head. A short rally at close quarters, and they close; in another moment the Slogger is thrown again heavily for the third time.

"I'll give you three to one on the little one in half-crowns," says Groove to Rattle.

"No, thank'ee," answers the other, diving his hands farther into his coat tails.

Just at this stage of the proceedings the door of the turret which leads to the Doctor's library suddenly opens, and he steps into the close, and makes straight for the ring, in which Brown and the Slogger are both seated on their seconds' knees for the last time.

"The Doctor! the Doctor!" shouts some small boy who catches sight of him, and the ring melts away in a few seconds, the small boys tearing off, Tom collaring his jacket and waistcoat, and slipping through the little gate by the chapel, and round the corner to Harrowell's with his backers, as lively as need be; Williams and his backers making off not quite so fast across the close, Groove, Rattle, and the other bigger fellows trying to combine dignity and prudence in a comical manner, and walking off fast enough, they hope, not to be recognized, and not fast enough to look like running away.

Young Brooke alone remains on the ground by the time the Doctor gets there, and touches his hat, not without a slight inward qualm.

"Hah! Brooke. I am surprised to see you here. Don't you know that I expect the sixth to stop fighting?"

Brooke felt much more uncomfortable than he had expected, but he was rather a favourite with the Doctor for his openness and plainness of speech; so blurted out, as he walked by the Doctor's side, who had already turned back—

"Yes, sir, generally. But I thought you wished us to exercise a discretion in the matter too—not to interfere too soon."

"But they have been fighting this half-hour and more," said the Doctor.

"Yes, sir; but neither was hurt. And they're the sort of boys who'll be all the better friends now, which they wouldn't have been if they had been stopped any earlier before it was so equal."

"Who was fighting with Brown?" said the Doctor.

"Williams, sir, of Thompson's. He is bigger than Brown, and had the best of it at first, but not when you came up, sir. There's a good deal of jealousy between our house and Thompson's, and there would have been more fights if this hadn't been let go on, or if either of them had had much the worst of it."

"Well but, Brooke," said the Doctor, "doesn't this look a little as if you exercised your discretion by only stopping a fight when the Schoolhouse boy is getting the worst of it?"

Brooke, it must be confessed, felt rather gravelled.

"Now remember," added the Doctor, as he stopped at the turret door, "this fight is not to go on—you'll see to that. And I expect you to stop all fights in future at once."

"Very well, sir," said young Brooke, touching his hat, and not sorry to see the turret door close behind the Doctor's back.

Meantime Tom and the staunchest of his adherents had reached Harrowell's, and Sally was bustling about to get them a late tea, while Stumps had been sent off to Tew the butcher, to get a piece of raw beef for Tom's eye, which was to be healed offhand so that he might show well in the morning. He was not a bit the worse except a slight difficulty in his vision, a singing in his ears, and a sprained thumb, which he kept in a cold-water bandage, while he drank lots of tea, and listened to the babel of voices talking and speculating of nothing but the fight, and how Williams would have given in after another fall (which he didn't in the least believe), and how on earth the Doctor could have got to know of it, such bad luck! He couldn't help thinking to himself that he was glad he hadn't won; he liked it better as it was, and felt very friendly to the Slogger. And then poor little Arthur crept in and sat down quietly near him, and kept looking at him and the raw beef with such plaintive looks, that Tom at last burst out laughing.

"Don't make such eyes, young 'un," said he, "there's nothing the matter."

"Oh, but, Tom, are you much hurt? I can't bear thinking it was all for me."

"Not a bit of it, don't flatter yourself. We were sure to have had it out sooner or later."

"Well, but you won't go on, will you? You'll promise me you won't go on?"

"Can't tell about that—all depends on the houses. We're in the hands of our countrymen, you know. Must fight for the Schoolhouse flag, if so be."

However, the lovers of the science were doomed to disappointment this time. Directly after locking-up, one of the night fags knocked at Tom's door.

"Brown, young Brooke wants you in the sixth-form room."

Up went Tom to the summons, and found the magnates sitting at their supper.

"Well, Brown," said young Brooke, nodding to him, "how do you feel?"

"Oh, very well, thank you, only I've sprained my thumb, I think."

"Sure to do that in a fight. Well, you hadn't the worst of it, I could see. Where did you learn that throw?"

"Down in the country, when I was a boy."

"Hullo! why, what are you now? Well, never mind, you're a plucky fellow. Sit down and have some supper."

Tom obeyed, by no means loth. And the fifth-form boy next him filled him a tumbler of bottled beer, and he ate and drank, listening to the pleasant talk, and wondering how soon he should be in the fifth, and one of that much envied society.

As he got up to leave, Brooke said, "You must shake hands to-morrow morning; I shall come and see that done after first lesson."

And so he did. And Tom and the Slogger shook hands with great satisfaction and mutual respect. And for the next year or two, whenever fights were being talked of, the small boys who had been present shook their heads wisely, saying, "Ah! but you should just have seen the fight between Slogger Williams and Tom Brown!"



Red-skin and Pale-face

J. FENIMORE COOPER

THE young man named Deerslayer by the Delawares goes off to recover a canoe lost by his friend old Hutter, and finds himself confronted by a hostile Mingo. Deerslayer is not a cruel hunter of his fellow-men, and does not take advantage of the Indian. But the Indian is not so chivalrous, and tries to murder the paleface when he has the opportunity. But Deerslayer has a quick eye and a sure aim, and he proves faster than the redskin and shoots straighter. Before he dies the Indian gives Deerslayer a new name, one which was to remain with him throughout many long novels written by the author of this tale, which is taken from *The Deerslayer*.

Deerslayer adjusted his hard pillow, stretched his form in the bottom of the canoe, and slept.

Day had fairly dawned before the young man again opened his eyes. This was no sooner done, than he started up, and looked about him with the eagerness of one who suddenly felt the importance of accurately ascertaining his precise position. His rest had been deep and undisturbed; and when he awoke, it was with a clearness of intellect and a readiness of resources that were much needed at that particular moment. The sun had not risen, it is true, but the vault of heaven was rich with the winning softness that "brings and shuts the day," while the whole air was filled with the carols of birds, the hymns of the feathered tribe. These sounds first told Deerslayer the risks he ran. The air, for wind it could scarce be called, was still light, it is true, but it had increased a little in the course of the night, and as the canoes were mere feathers on the water, they had drifted twice the expected distance, and, what was still more dangerous, had approached so near the base of the mountain that here rose precipitously from the eastern shore, as to render the carols of the birds plainly audible. This was not the worst. The third canoe had taken the same direction, and was slowly drifting towards a point where it must inevitably touch, unless turned aside by a shift of wind, or human hands. In other respects, nothing presented itself to attract attention, or to awaken alarm.

As a matter of course, Deerslayer's attention was first given to the canoe ahead. It was already quite near the point, and a very few strokes of the paddle sufficed to tell him that it must touch before he could possibly overtake it. Just at this moment, too, the wind inopportunately freshened, rendering the drift of the light craft much more rapid and certain. Feeling the impossibility of preventing a contact with the land, the young man wisely determined not to heat himself with unnecessary exertions; but first looking to the priming of his piece, he proceeded slowly and warily towards the point, taking care to make a little circuit, that he might be exposed on only one side, as he approached.

The canoe adrift being directed by no such intelligence, pursued its proper way, and grounded on a small sunken rock, at the distance of three or four yards from shore. Just at that moment, Deerslayer had got abreast of the point, and turned

the bows of his own boat to the land; first casting loose his tow, that his movements might be unencumbered. The canoe hung an instant on the rock; then it rose a hair's-breadth on an almost imperceptible swell of the water, swung round, floated clear and reached the strand. All this the young man noted, but it neither quickened his pulses nor hastened his hand. If any one had been lying in wait for the arrival of the waif, he must be seen, and the utmost caution in approaching shore became indispensable; if no one was in ambush, hurry was unnecessary. The point being nearly diagonally opposite to the Indian encampment, he hoped the last, though the former was not only possible, but probable; for the savages were prompt in adopting all the expedients of their particular modes of warfare, and quite likely had many scouts. As a glance at the lake from any height or projection would expose the smallest object on its surface, there was little hope that either of the canoes could pass unseen; and Indian sagacity needed no instruction to tell which way a boat or log would drift, when the direction of the wind was known. As Deerslayer drew nearer and nearer to the land, the stroke of his paddle grew slower, his eye became more watchful, and his ears and nostrils almost dilated with the effort to detect any lurking danger. 'Twas a trying moment. Equally free from recklessness and hesitation, his advance was marked by a sort of philosophical prudence, that appeared to render him superior to all motives but those which were best calculated to effect his purpose.

When about a hundred yards from the shore, Deerslayer rose in the canoe, gave three or four vigorous strokes with the paddle, sufficient of themselves to impel the bark to land, and then quickly laying aside the instrument of labour, he seized that of war. He was in the very act of raising the rifle, when a sharp report was followed by the buzz of a bullet that passed so near his body, as to cause him involuntarily to start. The next instant Deerslayer staggered, and fell his whole length in the bottom of the canoe. A yell—it came from a single voice—followed, and an Indian leaped from the bushes upon the open area of the point, bounding towards the canoe. This was the moment the young man desired. He rose on the instant, and levelled his own rifle at his uncovered foe; but his finger

hesitated about pulling the trigger on one whom he held at such disadvantage. This little delay, probably, saved the life of the Indian, who bounded back into the cover as swiftly as he had broken out of it. In the meantime Deerslayer had been swiftly approaching the land, and his own canoe reached the point just as his enemy disappeared. As its movements had not been directed, it touched the shore a few yards from the other boat; and though the rifle of his foe had to be loaded, there was not time to secure his prize, and to carry it beyond danger, before he would be exposed to another shot. Under the circumstances, therefore, he did not pause an instant, but dashed into the woods and sought a cover.

On the immediate point there was a small open area, partly in native grass, and partly beach, but a dense fringe of bushes lined its upper side. This narrow belt of dwarf vegetation passed, one issued immediately into the high and gloomy vaults of the forest. The land was tolerably level for a few hundred feet, and then it rose precipitously in a mountain-side. The trees were tall, large, and so free from under-brush, that they resembled vast columns, irregularly scattered, upholding a dome of leaves. Although they stood tolerably close together, for their ages and size, the eye could penetrate to considerable distances; and bodies of men, even, might have engaged beneath their cover, with concert and intelligence.

Deerslayer knew that his adversary must be employed in re-loading, unless he had fled. The former proved to be the case, for the young man had no sooner placed himself behind a tree, than he caught a glimpse of the arm of the Indian, his body being concealed by an oak, in the very act of forcing the leathered bullet home. Nothing would have been easier than to spring forward, and decide the affair by a close assault on his unprepared foe; but every feeling of Deerslayer revolted at such a step, although his own life had just been attempted from a cover. His colour had heightened, his eye frowned, his lips were compressed, and all his energies were collected and ready: but, instead of advancing to fire, he dropped his rifle to the usual position of a sportsman in readiness to catch his aim, and muttered to himself, unconscious that he was speaking—

“No, no—that may be red-skin warfare, but it’s not a

Christian's gift. Let the miscreant charge, and then we'll take it out like men; for the canoe he *must* not, and *shall* not, have. No, no; let him have time to load, and God will take care of the right!"

All this time the Indian had been so intent on his own movements, that he was even ignorant that his enemy was in the wood. His only apprehension was, that the canoe would be recovered and carried away before he might be in readiness to prevent it. He had sought the cover from habit, but was within a few feet of the fringe of bushes, and could be at the margin of the forest in readiness to fire in a moment. The distance between him and his enemy was about fifty yards, and the trees were so arranged by nature that the line of sight was not interrupted, except by the particular trees behind which each party stood.

His rifle was no sooner loaded, than the savage glanced around him, and advanced incautiously as regarded the real, but stealthily as respected the fancied position of his enemy, until he was fairly exposed. Then Deerslayer stepped from behind his own cover, and hailed him.

"This-a-way, red-skin; this-a-way, if you're looking for me," he called out. "It rests on yourself whether it's peace or war atween us; for my gifts are white gifts, and I'm not one of them that thinks it valiant to slay human mortals, singly, in the woods."

The savage was a good deal startled by this sudden discovery of the danger he ran. He had a little knowledge of English, however, and caught the drift of the other's meaning. He was also too well schooled to betray alarm, but, dropping the butt of his rifle to the earth, with an air of confidence, he made a gesture of lofty courtesy. All this was done with the ease and self-possession of one accustomed to consider no man his superior. In the midst of this consummate acting, however, the volcano that raged within caused his eyes to glare, and his nostrils to dilate, like those of some wild beast that is suddenly prevented from taking the fatal leap.

"Two canoe," he said, in the deep guttural tones of his race, holding up the number of fingers he mentioned, by way of preventing mistakes: "one for you—one for me."

"No, no, Mingo, that will never do. You own neither; and neither shall you have, as long as I can prevent it. I know it's war atween your people and mine, but that's no reason why human mortals should slay each other, like savage creatur's that meet in the woods; go your way, then, and leave me to go mine. The world is large enough for us both; and when we meet fairly in battle, why, the Lord will order the fate of each of us."

"Good!" exclaimed the Indian; "my brother missionary—great talk; all about Manitou."

"Not so—not so, warrior. I'm only a hunter, as yet, though afore the peace is made, 'tis like enough there'll be occasion to strike a blow at some of your people. Still, I wish it to be done in fair fight, and not in a quarrel about the ownership of a miserable canoe."

"Good! My brother very young—but he very wise little warrior—great talker. Chief, sometimes, in council."

"I don't know this, nor do I say it, Injin," returned Deerslayer, colouring a little at the ill-concealed sarcasm of the other's manner; "I look forward to a life in the woods, and I only hope it may be a peaceable one. All young men must go on the war-path, when there's occasion, but war isn't needfully massacre. I've seen enough to know that Providence frowns on it; and I now invite you to go your own way, while I go mine; and hope that we may part fri'nds."

"Good! My brother has two scalp—grey hair under t'other. Old wisdom—young tongue."

Here the savage advanced with confidence, his hand extended, his face smiling, and his whole bearing denoting amity and respect. Deerslayer met his offered friendship in a proper spirit, and they shook hands cordially, each endeavouring to assure the other of his sincerity and desire to be at peace.

"All have his own," said the Indian; "my canoe, mine; your canoe, your'n. Go look; if your'n, you keep; if mine, I keep."

"That's just, red-skin; though you must be wrong in thinking the canoe your property. Howsever, seein' is believin', and we'll go down to the shore, where you may look with your own eyes; for it's likely you'll object to trustin' altogether to mine."

The Indian uttered his favourite exclamation of "good!"

and then they walked, side by side, towards the shore. There was no apparent distrust in the manner of either, the Indian moving in advance, as if he wished to show his companion that he did not fear turning his back to him. As they reached the open ground, the former pointed towards Deerslayer's boat, and said emphatically—

"No mine—pale-face canoe. *This* red-man's. No want other man's canoe—want his own."

"You're wrong, red-skin, you're altogether wrong. This canoe was left in old Hutter's keeping, and is his'n according to all law, red or white, till its owner comes to claim it. Here's the seats and the stitching of the bark to speak for themselves. No man ever know'd an Injin to turn off such work."

"Good! My brother little ole—big wisdom. Injin no make him. White man's work."

"I'm glad you think so, for holding out to the contrary might have made ill blood atween us; every one having a right to take possession of his own. I'll just shove the canoe out of reach of dispute at once, as the quickest way of settling difficulties."

While Deerslayer was speaking, he put a foot against the end of the light boat, and giving a vigorous shove, he sent it out into the lake a hundred feet or more, where, taking the true current, it would necessarily float past the point, and be in no further danger of coming ashore. The savage started at this ready and decided expedient, and his companion saw that he cast a hurried and fierce glance at his own canoe, or that which contained the paddles. The change of manner, however, was but momentary, and then the Iroquois resumed his air of friendliness, and a smile of satisfaction.

"Good!" he repeated, with stronger emphasis than ever. "Young head, old mind. Know how to settle quarrel. Farewell, brother. Injin go to camp; tell chiefs no find canoe."

Deerslayer was not sorry to hear this and he took the offered hand of the Indian very willingly. The parting words were friendly, and, while the red-man walked calmly towards the wood, with the rifle in the hollow of his arm, without once looking back in uneasiness or distrust, the white man moved towards the remaining canoe, carrying his piece in the same pacific manner, it is true, but keeping his eyes fastened on the

movements of the other. This distrust, however, seemed to be altogether uncalled for, and, as if ashamed to have entertained it, the young man averted his look, and stepped carelessly up to his boat. Here he began to push the canoe from the shore, and to make his other preparations for departing. He might have been thus employed a minute, when, happening to turn his face towards the land, his quick and certain eye told him, at a glance, the imminent jeopardy in which his life was placed. The black, ferocious eyes of the savage were glancing on him, like those of the crouching tiger, through a small opening in the bushes, and the muzzle of his rifle seemed already to be opening in a line with his own body.

Then, indeed, the long practice of Deerslayer, as a hunter, did him good service. Accustomed to fire with the deer on the bound, and often when the precise position of the animal's body had in a manner to be guessed at, he used the same expedients here. To cock and poise his rifle were the acts of a single moment and a single motion; then, aiming almost without sighting, he fired into the bushes where he knew a body ought to be, in order to sustain the appalling countenance which alone was visible. There was not time to raise the piece any higher, or to take a more deliberate aim. So rapid were his movements, that both parties discharged their pieces at the same instant, the concussions mingling in one report. The mountains, indeed, gave back but a single echo. Deerslayer dropped his piece, and stood, with head erect, steady as one of the pines in the calm of a June morning, watching the result; while the savage gave the yell that has become historical for its appalling influence, leaped through the bushes and came bounding across the open ground, flourishing a tomahawk. Still Deerslayer moved not, but stood with his unloaded rifle fallen against his shoulders, while, with a hunter's habits, his hands were mechanically feeling for the powder-horn and charger. When about forty feet from his enemy, the savage hurled his keen weapon; but it was with an eye so vacant, and a hand so unsteady and feeble, that the young man caught it by the handle as it was flying past him. At that instant the Indian staggered and fell his whole length on the ground.

"I know'd it—I know'd it!" exclaimed Deerslayer, who was

already preparing to force a fresh bullet into his rifle; "I know'd it must come to this, as soon as I had got the range from the creatur's eyes. A man sights suddenly, and fires quick when his own life's in danger; yes, I know'd it would come to this. I was about the hundredth part of a second too quick for him, or it might have been bad for me! The riptyle's bullet has just grazed my side—but, say what you will for or ag'in 'em, a red-skin is by no means as sartain with powder and ball as a white man. Their gifts don't seem to lie that-a-way."

By this time the piece was reloaded, and Deerslayer, after tossing the tomahawk into the canoe, advanced to his victim, and stood over him, leaning on his rifle, in melancholy attention. The Indian was not dead, though shot directly through the body. He lay on his back motionless, but his eyes, now full of consciousness, watched each action of his victor—as the fallen bird regards the fowler—jealous of every movement. The man probably expected the fatal blow which was to precede the loss of his scalp, or perhaps he anticipated that this latter act of cruelty would precede his death. Deerslayer read his thoughts; and he found a melancholy satisfaction in relieving the apprehensions of the helpless savage.

"No, no, red-skin," he said; "you've nothing more to fear from me. I am of a Christian stock, and scalping is not of my gifts. I'll just make sartain of your rifle, and then come back and do you what sarvice I can. Though here I can't stay much longer, as the crack of three rifles will be apt to bring some of your devils down upon me."

The close of this was said in a sort of a soliloquy, as the young man went in quest of the fallen rifle. The piece was found where its owner had dropped it, and was immediately put into the canoe. Laying his own rifle at its side, Deerslayer then returned and stood over the Indian again.

"All inmity atween you and me's at an ind, red-skin," he said; "and you may set your heart at rest on the score of the scalp, or any further injury. My gifts are white, as I've told you; and I hope my conduct will be white also!"

Could looks have conveyed all they meant, it is probable Deerslayer's vanity on the subject of colour would have been rebuked a little; but he comprehended the gratitude that was

expressed in the eyes of the dying savage, without in the least detecting the bitter sarcasm that struggled with the better feeling.

"Water!" ejaculated the thirsty and unfortunate creature; "give poor Injin water."

"Aye, water you shall have, if you drink the lake dry. I'll just carry you down to it, that you may take your fill. This is the way, they tell me, with all wounded people—water is their greatest comfort and delight."

So saying, Deerslayer raised the Indian in his arms, and carried him to the lake. Here he first helped him to take an attitude in which he could appease his burning thirst; after which he seated himself on a stone, and took the head of his wounded adversary in his own lap, and endeavoured to soothe his anguish in the best manner he could.

"It would be sinful in me to tell you your time hadn't come, warrior," he commenced, "and therefore I'll not say it. You've passed the middle age already, and considerin' the sort of lives ye lead, your days have been pretty well filled. The principal thing now, is to look forward to what comes next. Neither red-skin nor pale-face, on the whole, calculates much on sleepin' for ever; but both expect to live in another world. Each has his gifts, and will be judged by 'em, and, I suppose, you've thought these matters over enough, not to stand in need of sarmons when the trial comes. You'll find your happy hunting-grounds, if you've been a just Injin; if an onjust, you'll meet your desarts in another way. I've my own idee about these things; but you're too old and exper'enced to need any explanations from one as young as I."

"Good!" ejaculated the Indian, whose voice retained its depth even as life ebbed away; "young head—ole wisdom!"

"It's sometimes a consolation, when the ind comes, to know that them we've harmed, or *tried* to harm, forgive us. Now, as for myself, I overlook altogether your designs ag'in my life; first, because no harm came of 'em; next, because it's your gifts, and natur', and trainin', and I ought not to have trusted you at all; and, finally and chiefly, because I can bear no ill-will to a dying man, whether heathen or Christian. So put your heart at ease, so far as I'm consarned; you know best what

other matters ought to trouble you, or what ought to give you satisfaction in so trying a moment."

It is probable that the Indian, like most of his people, and like too many of our own, thought more of dying in a way to gain applause among those he left than to secure a better state of existence hereafter. While Deerslayer was speaking, his mind was a little bewildered, though he felt that the intention was good; and when he had done, a regret passed over his spirit that none of his own tribe were present to witness his stoicism, under extreme bodily suffering, and the firmness with which he met his end. With the high innate courtesy that so often distinguishes the Indian warrior before he becomes corrupted by too much intercourse with the worst class of the white men, he endeavoured to express his thankfulness for the other's good intentions, and to let him understand that they were appreciated.

"Good!" he repeated, for this was an English word much used by the savages—"good—young head; young *heart*, too. *Old* heart tough; no shed tear. Hear Indian when he die, and no want to lie—what he call him?"

"Deerslayer is the name I bear now, though the Delawares have said that when I get back from this war-path, I shall have a more manly title, provided I can 'arn one."

"That good name for boy—poor name for warrior. He get better quick. No fear *there*"—the savage had strength sufficient, under the strong excitement he felt, to raise a hand and tap the young man on his breast—"eye sartain—finger lightning—aim, death—great warrior soon. No Deerslayer—Hawkeye—Hawkeye—Hawkeye. Shake hand."

Deerslayer—or Hawkeye, as the youth was then first named, for in after years he bore the appellation throughout all that region—Deerslayer took the hand of the savage, whose last breath was drawn in that attitude, gazing in admiration at the countenance of a stranger, who had shown so much readiness, skill, and firmness, in a scene that was equally trying and novel. When the reader remembers it is the highest gratification an Indian can receive to see his enemy betray weakness, he will be better able to appreciate the conduct which had extorted so great a concession at such a moment.

"His spirit has fled!" said Deerslayer, in a suppressed, melancholy voice. "Ah's me! Well, to this we must all come, sooner or later; and he is happiest, let his skin be of what colour it may, who is best fitted to meet it. Here lies the body of no doubt a brave warrior, and the soul is already flying towards its heaven or hell, whether that be a happy hunting-ground, a place scant of game; regions of glory, or flames of fire! So it happens, too, as regards other matters! Here have old Hutter and Hurry Harry got themselves into difficulty, if they hav'n't got themselves into torment and death, and all for a bounty that luck offers to me in what many would think a lawful and suitable manner. But not a farthing of such money shall cross my hand. White I was born, and white will I die; clinging to colour to the last, even though the King's Majesty, his governors, and all his councils, both at home and in the Colonies, forget from what they come, and where they hope to go, and all for a little advantage in warfare. No, no—warrior, hand of mine shall never molest your scalp, and so your soul may rest in peace on the p'int of making a decent appearance, when the body comes to join it, in your own land of spirits."

Deerslayer arose as soon as he had spoken. Then he placed the body of the dead man in a sitting posture, with its back against the little rock, taking the necessary care to prevent it from falling or in any way settling into an attitude that might be thought unseemly by the sensitive, though wild notions of a savage. When this duty was performed, the young man stood gazing at the grim countenance of his fallen foe, in a sort of melancholy abstraction. As was his practice, however, a habit gained by living so much alone in the forest, he then began again to give utterance to his thoughts and feelings aloud.

"I didn't wish your life, red-skin," he said, "but you left me no choice atween killing or being killed. Each party acted according to his gifts, I suppose, and blame can light on neither. You were treacherous, according to you natur' in war, and I was a little oversightful, as I'm apt to be in trusting others. If I was Injin born, now, I might tell of this, or carry in the scalp, and boast of the expl'ite afore the whole tribe; or, if my inimy had only been even a bear, 'twould have been nat'ral and

proper to let everybody know what had happened. And why should I wish to boast of it a'ter all? It's slaying a human, although he was a savage; and how do I know that he was a just Injin; and that he has not been taken away suddenly to anything but happy hunting-grounds. When it's onsertain whether good or evil has been done, the wisest way is not to be boastful."

Part of this was uttered aloud, while part was merely muttered between the speaker's teeth; his more confident opinions enjoying the first advantage, while his doubts were expressed in the latter mode. Soliloquy and reflection received a startling interruption, however, by the sudden appearance of a second Indian on the lake shore, a few hundred yards from the point. This man, evidently another scout, who had probably been drawn to the place by the reports of the rifles, broke out of the forest with so little caution that Deerslayer caught a view of his person before he was himself discovered. When the latter event did occur, as was the case a moment later, the savage gave a loud yell, which was answered by a dozen voices from different parts of the mountain-side. There was no longer any time for delay; in another minute the boat was quitting the shore under long and steady sweeps of the paddle.

As soon as Deerslayer believed himself to be at a safe distance, he prepared to collect his canoes, in order to tow them off. That nearest was soon in tow, when he proceeded in quest of the other, which was all this time floating up the lake. The eye of Deerslayer was no sooner fastened on this last boat, than it struck him that it was nearer to the shore than it would have been had it merely followed the course of the gentle current of air. He began to suspect the influence of some unseen current in the water, and he quickened his exertions, in order to regain possession of it before it could drift in to a dangerous proximity to the woods. On getting nearer, he thought that the canoe had a perceptible motion through the water, and, as it lay broadside to the air, that this motion was taking it towards the land. A few vigorous strokes of the paddle carried him still nearer, when the mystery was explained. Something was evidently in motion on the off-side of the canoe or that which was furthest from himself, and closer scrutiny showed that it

was a naked human arm. An Indian was lying in the bottom of the canoe, and was propelling it slowly, but certainly, to the shore, using his hands as a paddle. Deerslayer understood the whole artifice at a glance. A savage had swum off to the boat while he was occupied with his enemy on the point, got possession, and was using these means to urge it to the shore.

Satisfied that the man in the canoe could have no arms, Deerslayer did not hesitate to dash close alongside of the retiring boat, without deeming it necessary to raise his own rifle. As soon as the wash of the water, which he made in approaching, became audible to the prostrate savage, the latter sprang to his feet, and uttered an exclamation that proved how completely he was taken by surprise.

"If you've enj'yed yourself enough in that canoe, red-skin," Deerslayer coolly observed, stopping his own career in sufficient time to prevent an absolute collision between the two boats—"if you've enj'yed yourself enough in that canoe, you'll do a prudent act by taking to the lake ag'in. I'm reasonable in these matters, and don't crave your blood, though there's them about that would look upon you more as a due-bill for the bounty than a human mortal. Take to the lake this minute, afore we get to hot words."

The savage was one of those who did not understand a word of English, and he was indebted to the gestures of Deerslayer, and the expression of an eye that did not often deceive, for an imperfect comprehension of his meaning. Perhaps, too, the sight of the rifle that lay so near the hand of the white man quickened his decision. At all events, he crouched like a tiger about to take his leap, uttered a yell, and the next instant his naked body disappeared in the water. When he rose to take breath, it was at the distance of several yards from the canoe, and the hasty glance he threw behind him denoted how much he feared the arrival of a fatal messenger from the rifle of his foe. But the young man made no indication of any hostile intention. Deliberately securing the canoe to the others, he began to paddle from the shore; and by the time the Indian reached the land, and had shaken himself, like a spaniel on quitting the water, his dreaded enemy was already beyond rifle shot. As was so much his practice, Deerslayer did not fail

to soliloquize on what had just occurred, while steadily pursuing his course towards the point of destination.

"Well, well"—he commenced—" 'twould have been wrong to kill a human mortal without an object. Scalps are of no account with me, and life is sweet, and ought not to be taken mercilessly by them that have white gifts. The savage was a Mingo, it's true; and I make no doubts he is, and will be as long as he lives, a ra'al riptyle and vagabond; but that's no reason I should forget my gifts and colour. No, no—let him go; if ever we meet ag'in, rifle in hand, why then 'twill be seen which has the stoutest heart and the quickest eye. Hawkeye! That's not a bad name for a warrior, sounding much more manful and valiant than Deerslayer! 'Twouldn't be a bad title to begin with, and it has been fairly 'arned. Well, well—everything is in the hands of Providence; this affair as well as another; I'll trust to that for getting my desarts in all things."

Having thus betrayed what might be termed his weak spot, the young man continued to paddle in silence, making his way diligently, and as fast as his tows would allow him. By this time the sun had not only risen, but it had appeared over the eastern mountains, and was shedding a flood of glorious light on this as yet unchristened sheet of water. The whole scene was radiant with beauty; and no one unaccustomed to the ordinary history of the woods would fancy it had so lately witnessed incidents so ruthless and barbarous.



Unsheathed Steel

W. HARRISON AINSWORTH

QUEEN MARY, to be known in history as Bloody Mary, created her favourite courtier Edward Courtenay the Earl of Devonshire. Another of her favourites, the sinister Simon Renard, Ambassador from the Emperor Charles the Fifth, plotted secretly to prevent a possible marriage between Mary and Courtenay. He had other plans for the Queen. However, the masked enmity between the two favourites came to be bared. They crossed swords in a duel that was interrupted by Magog, one of the Tower's three giants, and Xit, its dwarf. Other stories about the giants Og, Gog, and Magog, and Xit the dwarf, and about Simon Renard and Courtenay, are to be found in the author's *The Tower of London*, from which this story is taken.

Mary continued to hold her court within the Tower. Various

reasons were assigned for this choice of residence; but her real motive was that her plans for the restoration of the Catholic religion could be more securely concerted within the walls of the fortress than elsewhere. Simon Renard, who had become her confidential adviser, and through whom she carried on an active correspondence with her cousin, the Emperor Charles the Fifth, could here visit her unobserved.

Other and gentler thoughts, however, than those connected with her government, occupied the bosom of the Queen: the impression produced upon her at their first interview on the Tower Green, by the striking figure and noble features of Edward Courtenay, whom she on that occasion created Earl of Devonshire, and of the speculations it gave rise to among the bystanders. The interest she then felt had been subsequently strengthened. And it appeared certain to all who had any means of observation, that if she selected a husband, her choice would fall upon Courtenay.

The progress of her attachment was jealously watched by Renard, who having other designs in view, secretly opposed it. But aware that Mary, like many of her sex, was possessed of a spirit, which would be apt, if thwarted, to run into the opposite extreme, he was obliged to proceed with the utmost caution. He had, moreover, a strong party against him. From the moment it became evident that the Queen regarded the Earl of Devonshire with the eyes of affection, all were eager to pay court to him. Among his warmest supporters were Gardiner and De Noailles; the latter being mainly influenced in his conduct by distrust of the Court of Spain. Renard, therefore, stood alone. But though everything appeared against him, he did not despair of success. Placing reliance upon Mary's jealous and suspicious character, he felt certain of accomplishing his purpose. Accordingly, he affected to approve her choice; and with the view of carrying out his scheme more effectually, took care to ingratiate himself with Courtenay.

Inexperienced as the latter was in the arts of a court, being then only twenty-one, and having passed fourteen years of his life in close captivity in the Tower, he was easily duped by the wily ambassador; and though repeatedly warned against him by De Noailles, who saw through Renard's design, he disregarded

the caution. Satisfied of the Queen's favourable disposition towards him, which was evinced by the most marked attention on her part, this young nobleman conceived himself wholly beyond the reach of rivalry; and trusting to his personal advantages, and the hold he had obtained over the affections of his royal mistress, he gave himself little concern about an opposition which he regarded as futile. He looked upon himself as certain of the Queen's hand; and but for his own imprudence, he would have been actually possessed of it.

On the onset of his career, however, Courtenay was assailed by temptations which it required more experience of the world to resist. Strictly confined from his earliest youth, it may be conceived that when first exposed to female fascination, his heart was speedily melted. Hitherto, he had only read of beauty. He now felt its full force, and placed no bounds to the admiration which the charms of the dames of honour excited within his breast. It was upon this point of his character that Renard justly grounded his hopes of alienating the Queen's affections. Encouraging his new-born licentiousness, he took care that none of his gallantries should fail to reach the ears of his royal mistress. Though of a staid and severe character, Mary was not indisposed to make allowances for one so utterly inexperienced as Courtenay; and her first direction to Renard was to check him. So far from doing this, the artful ambassador incited him to further irregularities and contrived to place new objects in his way. In vain, De Noailles remonstrated, entreating him at least to be more guarded in his conduct. In vain Gardiner sternly rebuked him. He turned a deaf ear alike to remonstrance and reproof; and hurried on by the unbridled impetuosity of youth, passed from one excess to another. Renard witnessed his conduct with secret satisfaction; but he was not prepared for the calmness with which the Queen viewed it. She was greatly displeased, yet as her lover still seemed passionately devoted to her, she looked upon his conduct as resulting from the circumstances of his previous life, and trusting he would soon open his eyes to its folly, was content to pardon it.

Renard then saw that he must have recourse to stronger measures. As Mary's jealousy was not to be easily aroused, he resolved to bring a more formidable rival into the field. There

was one ready made to his hand. It was the Princess Elizabeth. On no one point was the Queen's vanity more easily touched than by any reference to the superior charms of her sister. Any compliment paid the latter she construed into a slight to herself; and she watched with an uneasy glance the effect produced by her in public. So sensible was Elizabeth of the Queen's foible, that she kept in the background as much as possible. Unaware of the mortification he inflicted upon his royal mistress, and of the injury he did himself, Courtenay often praised the Princess's beauty in terms so rapturous as to call a blush into her cheek, while the blood was driven from that of Mary. So undisguised was his admiration, that the Queen resolved to remove the object of it from her court; and would have done so, but for the artful management of Renard, who felt that such a step would ruin his plans.

Long before Courtenay had noticed it, the subtle ambassador, well skilled in woman's feelings, ascertained the state of Elizabeth's heart, and saw that she was not proof against the captivating manners and personal graces of the handsome young nobleman. It was not difficult for one possessed of so many opportunities as himself to heighten this feeling into a passion; and before long he had the satisfaction to find that the Princess was deeply enamoured of her sister's suitor. Nor was Courtenay less easily enthralled. Apprised of his conquest by Renard, instead of resisting it, he at once surrendered himself to the snare. Again De Noailles, who saw his dangerous position, came to his aid. Again Gardiner rebuked him more severely than before. He derided their remonstrances; and heedless of the changing manner of the Queen—heedless also of the peril to which he exposed the Princess, he scarcely attempted to disguise his passion, or to maintain the semblance of love for his royal mistress. Consumed by jealousy, Mary meditated some blow which should satisfy her outraged feelings; while Renard only waited a favourable opportunity to bring matters to a crisis.

Affairs being in this state, it chanced one day that Courtenay received a summons to the Queen's presence, and instantly repairing thither, he found her alone. His reception was so cold, that he was at no loss to understand she was deeply offended;

and he would have thrown himself at her feet, if she had not prevented him by impatiently waving her hand.

"I have sent for you, my lord," she said, "for the last time——"

"For the last time, my gracious mistress!" exclaimed Courtenay.

"Do not interrupt me," rejoined Mary, severely. "I have sent for you to tell you that whatever were the feelings I once entertained for you, they are now entirely changed. I will not remind you of the favours I have shown you—of the honours I have bestowed on you—or of the greater honours I intended you. I will simply tell you that your ingratitude equals your perfidy; and that I banish you henceforth from my presence."

"How have I offended your Highness?" demanded Courtenay, panic-stricken.

"*How?*" cried Mary, fiercely, her eyes kindling, and her countenance assuming the terrible expression she inherited from her father. "Do you affect ignorance of the cause? I have overlooked your indiscretions, though I have not been ignorant of them, imputing them to youth and inexperience. I have overlooked them, I say, because I thought I discovered amid all this vice and folly the elements of a noble nature—and because," and her voice faltered, "I persuaded myself that you loved me."

"Have you no faith in my adjurations of attachment?" cried Courtenay, prostrating himself, and endeavouring to take her hand.

"None," rejoined the Queen, withdrawing her hand; "none whatever. Arise, my lord, and do not further degrade yourself. You may love the Queen, but you do not love the woman. You may prize my throne, but you do not prize me."

"You wrong me, gracious madam. On my soul you do," rejoined Courtenay. "I may have trifled with others, but I have given my heart wholly to you."

"It is false!" cried Mary, furiously. "You love the Princess, my sister."

Courtenay turned very pale. But he instantly recovered himself.

"Your Highness is mistaken," he answered.

"What!" cried the Queen, her anger increasing each moment. "Dare you persist in the denial of your falsehood? Dare you tell me to my face that you have not breathed words of passion

to her? Dare you assert that you have not lamented your engagement to me? Dare you say this?"

"I dare, madam."

"Then your own words shall give you the lie, traitor," replied the Queen. "Here is your letter to her," she added, producing a paper, "wherein you tell her so."

"Confusion!" muttered Courtenay, "Renard has betrayed me."

"Is this letter your writing?" demanded the Queen.

"I will not prevaricate, madam," replied Courtenay; "it is."

"And in the face of this you declare you have not deceived me?"

"I *have* deceived you, gracious madam," replied Courtenay. "But I have never ceased to love you."

"My lord!—my lord!" exclaimed Mary, in a menacing tone. "Beware how you attempt to deceive me further, or as God shall judge me, you shall find that the daughter of Henry the Eighth is not to be offended with impunity."

"I know you are terrible in anger, gracious madam," replied Courtenay; "but you are also just. Judge me, condemn me, if you please, but hear me. He who gave you that letter, Simon Renard, counselled me to write it."

"Ha!" exclaimed the Queen.

"I have been guilty of folly—madness—" rejoined Courtenay, "but not the black perfidy your Highness imagines. Dismiss me from your presence, send me into exile—I deserve any punishment—but do not believe that I have ceased to love you."

"I know not what *you* term love, my lord," replied Mary; "but I have no idea of sharing the affection of any man with another. Grant, however, that you speak the truth, why have you addressed this passionate epistle to the Princess Elizabeth?"

"I have already said I was deceived," replied Courtenay. "I cannot excuse my conduct, though I lament it."

"Are you sincere?" said Mary, who began to be softened by her lover's apparent penitence.

"By what oath shall I confirm my truth?" he replied, fervently.

"I will test it more surely," rejoined the Queen, as if struck by a sudden idea.

"In any way your Highness thinks proper," returned Courtenay.

"Summon the Princess Elizabeth to our presence instantly," said Mary, striking a small bell, the sound of which brought an usher before her.

"The Princess Elizabeth!" exclaimed Courtenay.

"Ay, the Princess," repeated the Queen. "I will confront you with her. Bid the Lord Chancellor and the ambassadors of Spain and France attend us," she continued to the usher.

"I know not what your Highness intends," said Courtenay, as the attendant departed. "But I will die rather than do aught to prejudice the Princess."

"I doubt it not, my lord," rejoined Mary, bitterly. "But though I cannot punish the perfidy of a lover, I can the disobedience of a subject. If you refuse to obey my commands, you will take the consequences."

Courtenay bit his lips to repress the answer that rose to them.

In a few minutes the usher returned and announced the Princess Elizabeth, as well as Gardiner, Renard, and De Noailles. Instantly perceiving how matters stood, the imperial ambassador deemed his own triumph complete, and Courtenay's disgrace certain.

"My lord," said Mary, addressing Gardiner, "it is no secret to you, neither to you, M. Renard, nor to you, M. De Noailles, that of all those proposed to me in marriage—the Princes of Spain and Portugal, the King of the Romans, Cardinal Pole, and others—I have preferred this man, whom I myself have raised to the rank he now holds, and enriched with the estates he enjoys."

"We know it, gracious madam," replied Gardiner, alarmed at the ominous commencement, "and we think your Highness has made a happy choice, and one most acceptable to your subjects. Do we not, M. Renard?"

The ambassador bowed, but said nothing.

"The alliance is in all respects agreeable to my sovereign, Henry the Second of France," observed De Noailles.

"What then if I inform you," pursued Mary, "that the Earl of Devonshire has rejected my proposal? What if he has broken his oath of fidelity? What if he has cast aside the crown offered

him, and smitten by the charms of a youthful beauty, abandoned the Queen, who has stooped to raise him to her throne!"

"Impossible!" exclaimed Gardiner and De Noailles.

"You are mistaken," rejoined Mary, sternly. "You shall hear him avow his perfidy with his own lips."

"When I *do* hear it," replied De Noailles, looking steadily at Courtenay, "I will believe it. But I cannot think him capable of such madness."

"Nor I," said Gardiner, glancing significantly from beneath his bent brows.

Elizabeth, who on the commencement of the Queen's address had turned very pale, could with difficulty maintain her composure. Her agitation did not escape the notice of Mary, whose jealousy was increased by the sight.

"What if I tell you," she continued, "that this false Earl has transferred his affections to our sister?"

"Your Highness!" exclaimed Elizabeth.

"Peace!" cried the Queen, fiercely. "And she, well knowing his engagement to ourself, has dared to encourage his suit."

"Whoever told your Majesty this, lied in his throat," cried Courtenay. "I own myself guilty, but the Princess Elizabeth is no partner to my folly."

"You do well to shield her, my lord," retorted Mary. "But you cannot deceive me. She is equally culpable."

"Nay, more so, if it comes to this," interposed Elizabeth, whose spirit, which was quite equal to her sister's, was aroused. "If I had repressed my admiration for the Earl of Devonshire, he would have made no advances to me. I am the most to blame in this matter."

"Not so," replied Courtenay. "Let my folly and presumption be visited on my own head. I pray your Highness to pass sentence on me at once. But do not let the Princess suffer for my fault."

"So, so!" exclaimed Mary, with a bitter laugh, "I have brought you to your confessions at last. If I had before doubted your love for each other, your present conduct would have convinced me of it. You shall have your request, my lord," she added, turning to Courtenay. "I *will* pass sentence upon you."

"Hold, madam," cried Gardiner. "Before the sentence is

passed and irrevocable, reflect—if only for one moment. You are a great queen, and the daughter of a great king. But the rashness of one moment may annihilate all your future peace, destroy the hopes of your people, and the prosperity of your reign. The conduct of the Earl of Devonshire is unpardonable, I allow. But for your own sake, for the sake of your kingdom—not for his—I beseech you to overlook it. That he loves you, I am assured.”

“Let him declare as much,” said Renard.

“Hear me, then,” replied Courtenay, throwing himself at the Queen’s feet. “I bitterly repent my rashness; and though I can never hope to be restored to the place I once held in your Majesty’s affections, I shall never cease to reproach myself, never cease to love you.”

Mary was visibly moved.

“If I thought you sincere?” she said.

“I will answer for his sincerity,” said Gardiner.

“And I,” added De Noailles. “She relents,” he continued in a whisper to Courtenay. “Improve the advantage you have gained.”

“Grant me an instant’s private audience with your Majesty,” implored Courtenay; “and I feel certain I can remove all your doubts.”

“No, my lord,” rejoined Mary. “As our rupture has been public, our reconciliation (if it takes place) shall be public also.”

“It must never take place,” remarked Renard, in an undertone.

“Peace, sir,” said the Queen, aloud. “As far as our government is concerned, we are content to follow your counsel. But in matters of the heart we shall follow its dictates alone.”

“Your Majesty is in the right,” observed Gardiner.

“Declare, my lord,” pursued Mary, addressing Courtenay, “in the presence of these gentlemen, in that of our sister—*rival* we ought to say—that you have deceived her, and, though your conduct may have misled her, have never swerved from your devotion to ourself.”

While the Queen pronounced these words, Renard’s keen glance wandered from Courtenay to Elizabeth. The latter was violently agitated, and seemed to await the Earl’s answer as if her fate hung upon it.

"Do you assert this, my lord?" demanded Mary.

"Hesitate, and you are lost, and so is the Princess," whispered De Noailles.

Before Courtenay could reply, Elizabeth fainted and would have fallen, if Renard had not flown to her assistance.

"Summon our maids of honour, and let her be instantly cared for," said Mary, with a look of ill-disguised satisfaction. "My lord," she added to Courtenay, "you are forgiven."

The Earl hastily, and with some confusion, expressed his thanks, while, in obedience to the Queen's mandate, Elizabeth was removed.

"And now, my lord," said Mary to him, "I must pass from my own affairs to those of my kingdom. I will not detain you further—nor you, M. De Noailles. But I must crave your attendance, my lord, for a few minutes," she added, turning to Gardiner, "and yours, M. Renard."

"Your Highness may always command my best counsel," replied the latter, in a slightly sarcastic tone, "provided you will act upon it."

"Farewell, my lord," said Mary, extending her hand to Courtenay, which he pressed to his lips. "I shall walk upon the Tower Green in an hour, and shall expect you there."

"I will attend your Majesty," replied Courtenay. And accompanied by De Noailles, he quitted the chamber.

"You have had a narrow escape, my lord," remarked the French ambassador, as they traversed the long gallery together.

"So narrow that I thought I had lost all chance of the crown," replied Courtenay. "It is the work of that perfidious Simon Renard. But if I live an hour, I will requite him."

"You are the victor, my lord," returned De Noailles. "Maintain your present position, and you may defy his utmost malice."

"Tarry with me a moment, M. De Noailles," said Courtenay, "and you shall see how I will avenge myself upon him."

"Prudence, my good lord, prudence," replied De Noailles. "Your rashness has already put you once in his power. Do not let it do so a second time."

"I will punish his treachery, if it costs me my life," replied Courtenay.

On issuing from the audience-chamber, Renard perceived De Noailles and Courtenay pacing the gallery.

"I have waited for you, sir," said the latter, advancing to meet him.

"I am sorry to have detained your lordship so long," replied Renard.

"Apologies are needless," rejoined Courtenay. "M. Renard, you are a double-faced villain."

"Rail on, my lord, and welcome," replied Renard, contemptuously. "Your ill-humour has no effect on me!"

"Coward! will not that move you?" cried Courtenay, taking off his glove, and striking him with it in the face.

"Ha!" exclaimed Renard fiercely, and half-unsheathing his sword. "Follow me, my lord, and you shall find me as prompt to avenge an insult as you can be to offer one."

"My lord," interposed De Noailles, "and you, M. Renard, I warn you before you proceed further in this quarrel, that it will deeply offend the Queen."

"It was not my seeking," replied Renard, sternly. "But since it is forced upon me, I will not be stayed. As his lordship has found no difficulty in duping her Majesty with a feigned passion, so, if he survives, he may readily make out his case by an equally false statement that I was the aggressor."

"Insolent!" cried Courtenay. "Fool that I was to place any faith in one in whom the whole perfidy of his country seems concentrated. Follow me, and quickly, or I will repeat the blow—unless," he added with bitter scorn, "like your own arrogant but cowardly nation you prefer avenging it by assassination."

"The cowardice will be yours, my lord," rejoined Renard, haughtily, "if you attempt to repeat the blow—nay, if you tarry here longer, I shall think you desire to attract the attention of some of her Majesty's attendants, and by causing us to be arrested, contrive to escape my vengeance."

"Trust me, sir, I have no such intention," replied Courtenay. "An Englishman never deals a blow without allowing his adversary to return it. M. De Noailles, I request your attendance at the duel. It will be a mortal combat, for I will neither give mercy nor receive it from this perfidious villain."

"Pardon me, my lord, if I refuse your request," replied De

Noailles. "I pledge my word that I will not interrupt you, nor cause you to be interrupted during the adjustment of your differences. But I will be no party to the duel."

"As you please," replied Courtenay. "Come then, sir," he added, turning to Renard, "and let the recollection of the insult I have offered you be fresh in your memory."

"M. De Noailles," said Renard, "I take you to witness before I depart, that I have not sought this quarrel. Whatever ensues, you will avouch the truth."

"Undoubtedly," replied De Noailles. "Whither are you going?" he demanded.

"To the palace-garden," replied Courtenay. "It is the only place in the Tower where we can be free from interruption. Beneath the trees we shall be unobserved."

"Lead on then, my lord," cried Renard, impatiently. "The affair ought to have been arranged by this time."

Hastily quitting the corridor, they descended the grand staircase, and traversing with rapid steps a long suite of apartments, passed through a small door opening from the range of building called the Queen's gallery, upon the Privy Garden. At the western angle of this garden stood a grove of trees, and thinking themselves unobserved they hastened towards it.

It chanced, however, at this moment that Xit was passing along one of the walks, and struck by their furious looks he immediately conjectured their errand, and being of an inquisitive turn, determined to watch them, and with this view struck into a shrubbery, which effectually screened him from observation.

On reaching the grove, Renard instantly divested himself of his cloak, and drawing his rapier and dagger, placed himself in an attitude of defence. Courtenay did not remove his mantle, and therefore he was in readiness before his adversary. The preliminary forms always observed by the combatants of the period, being gone through, the conflict commenced with great fury on the side of Courtenay, and with equal animosity, but more deliberation, on that of Renard. As the latter was the most perfect swordsman of his time, he felt little doubt as to the result of the combat; but still the fury of the Earl was so irresistible that he broke through his surest wards. In one of these

furious passes Renard received a slight wound in the arm, and roused by the pain, he forgot his cautious system, and returned Courtenay's thrusts with others equally desperate.

Feeling that he was no match for his antagonist, who was evidently his superior both in force and skill, the Earl now determined to bring the combat to a close, before his strength should be further exhausted. Collecting all his energies, he dashed upon Renard with such impetuosity, that the latter was compelled to retreat, and his foot catching against the root of a tree, he fell, and lay at the mercy of his antagonist.

"Strike!" he cried. "I will never yield."

"No," replied Courtenay. "I will not take this advantage. Arise, and renew the combat."

"Your courtesy is like your attachment, misplaced, my lord," replied Renard, springing to his feet, and preparing to attack him. "Look to yourself."

The combat recommenced with fresh fury, and must have speedily terminated fatally, if a sudden interruption had not occurred. Alarmed by the deadly nature of the strife, and thinking he should gain credit with the Queen if he prevented any accident to her favourite, Xit no sooner beheld the swords drawn, than he ran off as swiftly as he could to the garden-gate, near the Lanthorn Tower, where he knew Magog was stationed. The giant did not require to be bid twice to accompany him; but grasping his immense halbert, hurried in the direction of the fight, and reached the grove just as it had recommenced.

The combatants were so occupied with each other, and so blinded with rage, that they did not hear his approach. Magog, however, soon made them sensible of his presence. Bidding them in a voice of thunder lay down their arms, and finding himself wholly disregarded, he rushed between them, and seizing each by the doublet, hurled them forcibly backwards, swearing lustily that if either advanced another footstep, he would fell him to the ground with his partisan. By this time Xit, who had come up, drew his sword, and seconded the giant's threat, adding with his usual coxcombical dignity, "My lords, I command you, in the Queen's name, to deliver up your weapons to me."

Upon this, he took off his cap, and strutting up to Courtenay, demanded his sword.

"What if I refuse it, sirrah?" said the Earl, who in spite of his indignation, could scarcely help laughing at the dwarf's assurance.

"Your lordship, I am assured, will not compel me to enforce its delivery," replied Xit.

"I will not," replied Courtenay, delivering the weapon to him.

"I shall not fail to report your magnanimity to my royal mistress," returned Xit. "Now yours, worshipful sir," he added, to Renard.

"Take it," replied the ambassador, flinging his rapier on the ground. "It is fit that an affair so ridiculously begun, should have such a ridiculous termination."

"It is not ended, sir," rejoined Courtenay.

"You will note that, Magog," interposed Xit. "His lordship says it is not ended. Her Majesty must hear of this. I take upon myself to place you both in arrest. Attach their persons, Magog."

"This insolence shall not go unpunished," cried Courtenay, angrily.

"Heed him not, Magog," whispered Xit. "I am sure her Highness will approve our conduct. At all events, I take the responsibility of the arrest upon myself—though I promise thee, if there is any reward, thou shalt share it. I arrived at a critical minute for your lordship," he added, in an undertone to Courtenay. "Your adversary's blade was within an inch of your breast."

"Peace, knave," cried Courtenay.

"Bring them along, Magog," said Xit, "while I run to the palace to apprise her Majesty of the occurrence, and ascertain her pleasure concerning them."

"Hold!" exclaimed Courtenay. "Take this purse, and keep silence on the subject."

"No, my lord," replied Xit, with an offended look, "I am above a bribe. Had your lordship—but no matter. Magog, you will answer for their peaceable conduct. I am off to the palace."

And he hurried away, while the giant followed at a slow pace with Courtenay and Renard.



The Submarine Forest

JULES VERNE

MONSIEUR ARONNAX, a French professor, with his servant Conseil, and Captain Nemo of the fabulous submarine *Nautilus* prepare to undertake an adventurous exploration as divers on the bed of the sea. The professor, who is the narrator of this story from *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, finds himself in a strange undersea world of crystalline turrets and edifices lit with a curious phosphorescent light, and is led by Captain Nemo to the submarine forest of the Island of Crespo. There the professor is introduced to another world, known to only a handful of men. On the return trip to the *Nautilus* he is provided with a forceful reminder that it is a world in which grim dangers lurk.

Captain Nemo led me aft; and in passing before Ned and

Conseil's cabin, I called my two companions, who followed immediately. We then came to a kind of cell near the machinery-room, in which we were to put on our walking-dress.

This cell was, to speak correctly, the arsenal and wardrobe of the *Nautilus*. A dozen diving apparatuses hung from the partition waiting our use.

Ned Land, on seeing them, showed evident repugnance to dress himself in one.

"But, my worthy Ned, the forests of the Island of Crespo are nothing but submarine forests."

"Good!" said the disappointed harpooner, who saw his dreams of fresh meat fade away. "And you, M. Aronnax, are you going to dress yourself in those clothes?"

"There is no alternative, Master Ned."

"As you please, sir," replied the harpooner, shrugging his shoulders; "but as for me, unless I am forced, I will never get into one."

"No one will force you, Master Ned," said Captain Nemo.

"Is Conseil going to risk it?" asked Ned.

"I follow my master wherever he goes," replied Conseil.

At the Captain's call two of the ship's crew came to help us to dress in these heavy and impervious clothes, made of india-rubber without seam, and constructed expressly to resist considerable pressure. One would have thought it a suit of armour, both supple and resisting. This suit formed trousers and waistcoat. The trousers were finished off with thick boots, weighted with heavy leaden soles. The texture of the waistcoat was held together by bands of copper, which crossed the chest, protecting it from the great pressure of the water, and leaving the lungs free to act; the sleeves ended in gloves, which in no way restrained the movement of the hands. There was a vast difference noticeable between these consummate apparatuses and the old cork breastplates, jackets, and other contrivances in vogue during the eighteenth century.

Captain Nemo and one of his companions (a sort of Hercules, who must have possessed great strength), Conseil, and myself, were soon enveloped in the dresses. There remained nothing more to be done but to enclose our heads in the metal box. But

before proceeding to this operation, I asked the Captain's permission to examine the guns we were to carry.

One of the *Nautilus* men gave me a simple gun, the butt end of which, made of steel, hollow in the centre, was rather large. It served as a reservoir for compressed air, which a valve, worked by a spring, allowed to escape into a metal tube. A box of projectiles, in a groove in the thickness of the butt end, contained about twenty of these electric balls, which, by means of a spring, were forced into the barrel of the gun. As soon as one shot was fired, another was ready.

"Captain Nemo," said I, "this arm is perfect, and easily handled; I only ask to be allowed to try it. But how shall we gain the bottom of the sea?"

"At this moment, Professor, the *Nautilus* is stranded in five fathoms, and we have nothing to do but to start."

"But how shall we get off?"

"You shall see."

Captain Nemo thrust his head into the helmet, Conseil and I did the same, not without hearing an ironical "Good sport!" from the Canadian. The upper part of our dress terminated in a copper collar, upon which was screwed the metal helmet. Three holes, protected by thick glass, allowed us to see in all directions, by simply turning our head in the interior of the head-dress. As soon as it was in position, the Rouquayrol apparatus on our backs began to act; and, for my part, I could breathe with ease.

With the Ruhmkorff lamp hanging from my belt, and the gun in my hand, I was ready to set out. But to speak the truth, imprisoned in these heavy garments, and glued to the deck by my leaden soles, it was impossible for me to take a step.

But this state of things was provided for. I felt myself being pushed into a little room contiguous to the wardrobe-room. My companions followed, towed along in the same way. I heard a water-tight door, furnished with stopper-plates, close upon us, and we were wrapped in profound darkness.

After some minutes, a loud hissing was heard. I felt the cold mount from my feet to my chest. Evidently from some part of the vessel they had, by means of a tap, given entrance to the water, which was invading us, and with which the room was

soon filled. A second door cut in the side of the *Nautilus* then opened. We saw a faint light. In another instant our feet trod the bottom of the sea.

And now, how can I retrace the impression left upon me by that walk under the waters? Words are impotent to relate such wonders! Captain Nemo walked in front, his companion followed some steps behind. Conseil and I remained near each other, as if an exchange of words had been possible through our metallic cases. I no longer felt the weight of my clothing, or of my shoes, of my reservoir of air, or my thick helmet, in the midst of which my head rattled like an almond in its shell.

The light, which lit the soil thirty feet below the surface of the ocean, astonished me by its power. The solar rays shone through the watery mass easily, and dissipated all colour, and I clearly distinguished objects at a distance of a hundred and fifty yards. Beyond that the tints darkened into fine gradations of ultramarine, and faded into vague obscurity. Truly this water which surrounded me was but another air denser than the terrestrial atmosphere, but almost as transparent. Above me was the calm surface of the sea. We were walking on fine even sand, not wrinkled, as on a flat shore, which retains the impression of the billows. This dazzling carpet, really a reflector, repelled the rays of the sun with wonderful intensity, which accounted for the vibration which penetrated every atom of liquid. Shall I be believed when I say that, at the depth of thirty feet, I could see as if I was in broad daylight?

For a quarter of an hour I trod on this sand, sown with the impalpable dust of shells. The hull of the *Nautilus*, resembling a long shoal, disappeared by degrees; but its lantern, when darkness should overtake us in the waters, would help to guide us on board by its distinct rays.

Soon forms of objects outlined in the distance were discernible. I recognised magnificent rocks, hung with a tapestry of zoophytes of the most beautiful kind, and I was at first struck by the peculiar effect of this medium.

It was then ten in the morning; the rays of the sun struck the surface of the waves at rather an oblique angle, and at the touch of their light, decomposed by refraction as through a prism, flowers, rocks, plants, shells, and polypi were shaded at

the edges by the seven solar colours. It was marvellous, a feast for the eyes, this complication of coloured tints, a perfect kaleidoscope of green, yellow, orange, violet, indigo, and blue; in one word, the whole palette of an enthusiastic colourist! Why could I not communicate to Conseil the lively sensations which were mounting to my brain, and rival him in expressions of admiration? For aught I knew, Captain Nemo and his companion might be able to exchange thoughts by means of signs previously agreed upon. So, for want of better, I talked to myself; I declaimed in the copper box which covered my head, thereby expending more air in vain words than was perhaps expedient.

Various kinds of isis, clusters of pure tuft-coral, prickly fungi, and anemones, formed a brilliant garden of flowers, enamelled with porphitæ, decked with their collarettes of blue tentacles, sea-stars studding the sandy bottom, together with asterophytions like fine lace embroidered by the hands of naiads, whose festoons were waved by the gentle undulations caused by our walk. It was a real grief to me to crush under my feet the brilliant specimens of molluscs which strewed the ground by thousands, of hammerheads, donaciæ, (veritable bounding shells), of staircases, and red helmet-shells, angel-wings, and many others produced by this inexhaustible ocean. But we were bound to walk, so we went on, whilst above our heads waved shoals of physalides leaving their tentacles to float in their train, medusæ whose umbrellas of opal or rose-pink, scalloped with a band of blue, sheltered us from the rays of the sun and fiery pelagiæ, which, in the darkness, would have strewn our path with phosphorescent light.

All these wonders I saw in the space of a quarter of a mile, scarcely stopping, and following Captain Nemo, who beckoned me on by signs. Soon the nature of the soil changed; to the sandy plain succeeded an extent of slimy mud, which the Americans call "ooze", composed of equal parts of silicious and calcareous shells. We then travelled over a plain of sea-weed of wild and luxuriant vegetation. This sward was of close texture, and soft to the feet, and rivalled the softest carpet woven by the hand of man. But whilst verdure was spread at our feet, it did not abandon our heads. A light network of marine plants, of that

inexhaustible family of seaweeds of which more than two thousand kinds are known, grew on the surface of the water. I saw long ribbons of fucus floating, some globular, others tuberos; laurenciæ and cladostephi of most delicate foliage, and some rhodomeniæ palmatæ, resembling the fan of a cactus. I noticed that the green plants kept nearer the top of the sea, whilst the red were at a greater depth, leaving to the black or brown hydrophytes the care of forming gardens and parterres in the remote beds of the ocean.

We had quitted the *Nautilus* about an hour and a half. It was near noon; I knew by the perpendicularity of the sun's rays, which were no longer refracted. The magical colours disappeared by degrees, and the shades of emerald and sapphire were effaced. We walked with a regular step, which rang upon the ground with astonishing intensity; the slightest noise was transmitted with a quickness to which the ear is unaccustomed on the earth; indeed, water is a better conductor of sound than air, in the ratio of four to one. At this period the earth sloped downwards; the light took a uniform tint. We were at a depth of a hundred and five yards and twenty inches, undergoing a pressure of six atmospheres.

At this depth I could still see the rays of the sun, though feebly; to their intense brilliancy had succeeded a reddish twilight, the lowest state between day and night; but we could still see well enough; it was not necessary to resort to the Ruhmkorff apparatus as yet. At this moment Captain Nemo stopped; he waited till I joined him, and then pointed to an obscure mass, looming in the shadow, at a short distance.

"It is the forest of the Island of Crespo," thought I—and I was not mistaken.

We had at last arrived on the borders of this forest, doubtless one of the finest of Captain Nemo's immense domains. He looked upon it as his own, and considered he had the same right over it that the first men had in the first days of the world. And, indeed, who would have disputed with him the possession of this submarine property? What other hardier pioneer would come, hatchet in hand, to cut down the dark copses?

This forest was composed of large tree-plants; and the moment we penetrated under its vast arcades, I was struck by the

singular position of their branches—a position I had not yet observed.

Not a herb which carpeted the ground, not a branch which clothed the trees, was either broken or bent, nor did they extend horizontally; all stretched up to the surface of the ocean. Not a filament, not a ribbon, however thin they might be, but kept as straight as a rod of iron. The fuci and lianas grew in rigid perpendicular lines, due to the density of the element which had produced them. Motionless, yet, when bent to one side by the hand, they directly resumed their former position. Truly it was the region of perpendicularity!

I soon accustomed myself to this fantastic position, as well as to the comparative darkness which surrounded us. The soil of the forest seemed covered with sharp blocks, difficult to avoid. The submarine flora struck me as being very perfect, and richer even than it would have been in the arctic or tropical zones, where these productions are not so plentiful. But for some minutes I involuntarily confounded the genera, taking zoophytes for hydrophytes, animals for plants; and who would not have been mistaken? The fauna and the flora are too closely allied in this submarine world.

These plants are self-propagated, and the principle of their existence is in the water, which upholds and nourishes them. The greater number, instead of leaves, shoot forth blades of capricious shapes, comprised within a scale of colours,—pink, carmine, green, olive, fawn, and brown. I saw there (but not dried up, as our specimens of the *Nautilus* are) pavonari spread like a fan, as if to catch the breeze; scarlet ceramies, whose laminaries extended their edible shoots of fern-shaped nereocysti, which grow to a height of fifteen feet; clusters of acetabuli, whose stems increase in size upwards; and numbers of other marine plants, all devoid of flowers!

“Curious anomaly, fantastic element!” said an ingenious naturalist, “in which the animal kingdom blossoms, and the vegetable does not!”

Under these numerous shrubs (as large trees of the temperate zone), and under their damp shadow, were massed together real bushes of living flowers, hedges of zoophytes, on which blossomed some zebremeandrines, with crooked grooves, some

yellow caryophylliæ; and, to complete the illusion, the fish-flies flew from branch to branch like a swarm of humming-birds, whilst yellow lepisacomthi, with bristling jaws, dactylopteri, and monocentrides rose at our feet like a flight of snipes.

In about an hour Captain Nemo gave the signal to halt. I, for my part, was not sorry, and we stretched ourselves under an arbour of alariæ, the long thin blades of which stood up like arrows.

This short rest seemed delicious to me; there was nothing wanting but the charm of conversation; but, impossible to speak, impossible to answer, I only put my great copper head to Conseil's. I saw the worthy fellow's eyes glistening with delight, and to show his satisfaction, he shook himself in his breastplate of air, in the most comical way in the world.

After four hours of this walking I was surprised not to find myself dreadfully hungry. How to account for this state of the stomach I could not tell. But instead I felt an insurmountable desire to sleep, which happens to all divers. And my eyes soon closed behind the thick glasses, and I fell into a heavy slumber, which the movement alone had prevented before. Captain Nemo and his robust companion, stretched in the clear crystal, set us the example.

How long I remained buried in this drowsiness, I cannot judge; but when I woke, the sun seemed sinking towards the horizon. Captain Nemo had already risen, and I was beginning to stretch my limbs, when an unexpected apparition brought me briskly to my feet.

A few steps off, a monstrous sea-spider, about thirty-eight inches high, was watching me with squinting eyes, ready to spring upon me. Though my diver's dress was thick enough to defend me from the bite of this animal, I could not help shuddering with horror. Conseil and the sailor of the *Nautilus* awoke at this moment. Captain Nemo pointed out the hideous crustacean, which a blow from the butt end of the gun knocked over, and I saw the horrible claws of the monster writhe in terrible convulsions. This accident reminded me that other animals more to be feared might haunt these obscure depths, against whose attacks my diving-dress would not protect me. I had never thought of it before, but I now resolved to be upon my

guard. Indeed, I thought that this halt would mark the termination of our walk; but I was mistaken, for, instead of returning to the *Nautilus*, Captain Nemo continued his bold excursion. The ground was still on the incline, its declivity seemed to be getting greater, and to be leading us to greater depths. It must have been about three o'clock when we reached a narrow valley, between high perpendicular walls, situated about seventy-five fathoms deep. Thanks to the perfection of our apparatus, we were forty-five fathoms below the limit which nature seems to have imposed on man as to his submarine excursions.

I say seventy-five fathoms, though I had no instrument by which to judge the distance. But I knew that even in the clearest waters the solar rays could not penetrate further. And accordingly the darkness deepened. At ten paces not an object was visible. I was groping my way, when I suddenly saw a brilliant white light. Captain Nemo had just put his electric apparatus into use; his companion did the same, and Conseil and I followed their example. By turning a screw I established a communication between the wire and the spiral glass, and the sea, lit by our four lanterns, was illuminated for a circle of thirty-six yards.

Captain Nemo was still plunging into the dark depths of the forest, whose trees were getting scarcer at every step. I noticed that vegetable life disappeared sooner than animal life. The medusæ had already abandoned the arid soil, from which a great number of animals, zoophytes, articulata, molluscs, and fishes, still obtained sustenance.

As we walked, I thought the light of our Ruhmkorff apparatus could not fail to draw some inhabitant from its dark couch. But if they did approach us, they at least kept at a respectful distance from the hunters. Several times I saw Captain Nemo stop, put his gun to his shoulder, and after some moments drop it and walk on. At last, after about four hours, this marvellous excursion came to an end. A wall of superb rocks, in an imposing mass, rose before us, a heap of gigantic blocks, an enormous steep granite shore, forming dark grottos, but which presented no practicable slope; it was the prop of the Island of Crespo. It was the earth! Captain Nemo stopped suddenly. A gesture of his brought us all to a halt; and however desirous I might be to

scale the wall, I was obliged to stop. Here ended Captain Nemo's domains. And he would not go beyond them. Further on was a portion of the globe he might not trample upon.

The return began. Captain Nemo had returned to the head of his little band, directing their course without hesitation. I thought we were not following the same road to return to the *Nautilus*. The new road was very steep, and consequently very painful. We approached the surface of the sea rapidly. But this return to the upper strata was not so sudden as to cause relief from the pressure too rapidly, which might have produced serious disorder in our organisation, and brought on internal lesions, so fatal to divers. Very soon light reappeared and grew, and the sun being low on the horizon, the refraction edged the different objects with a spectral ring. At ten yards and a half deep, we walked amidst a shoal of little fishes of all kinds, more numerous than the birds of the air, and also more agile; but no aquatic game worthy of a shot had as yet met our gaze, when at that moment I saw the Captain shoulder his gun quickly, and follow a moving object into the shrubs. He fired;—I heard a slight hissing, and a creature fell stunned at some distance from us. It was a magnificent sea-otter, an *enhydrus*, the only exclusively marine quadruped. This otter was five feet long, and must have been very valuable. Its skin, chestnut-brown above, and silvery underneath, would have made one of those beautiful furs so sought after in the Russian and Chinese markets. I admired this curious mammal, with its rounded head ornamented with short ears, its round eyes, and white whiskers like those of a cat, with webbed feet and nails, and tufted tail. This precious animal, hunted and tracked by fishermen, has now become very rare, and taken refuge chiefly in the northern parts of the Pacific, or probably its race would soon become extinct.

Captain Nemo's companion took the beast, threw it over his shoulder, and we continued our journey. For one hour a plain of sand lay stretched before us. Sometimes it rose to within two yards and some inches of the surface of the water. I then saw our image clearly reflected, drawn inversely, and above us appeared an identical group reflecting our movements and our actions; in a word, like us in every point, except that they walked with their heads downward and their feet in the air.

Another effect I noticed, which was the passage of thick clouds which formed and vanished rapidly; but on reflection I understood that these seeming clouds were due to the varying thickness of the reeds at the bottom, and I could even see the fleecy foam which their broken tops multiplied on the water, and the shadows of large birds passing above our heads, whose rapid flight I could discern on the surface of the sea.

On this occasion, I was witness to one of the finest gunshots which ever made the nerves of a hunter thrill. A large bird of great breadth of wing, clearly visible, approached, hovering over us. Captain Nemo's companion shouldered his gun and fired, when it was only a few yards above the waves. The creature fell stunned, and the force of its fall brought it within the reach of the dexterous hunter's grasp. It was an albatross of the finest kind.

Our march had not been interrupted by this incident. For two hours we followed these sandy plains, then fields of algæ very disagreeable to cross. Candidly, I could do no more when I saw a glimmer of light, which, for a half mile, broke the darkness of the waters. It was the lantern of the *Nautilus*. Before twenty minutes were over we should be on board, and I should be able to breathe with ease, for it seemed that my reservoir supplied air very deficient in oxygen. But I did not reckon on an accidental meeting, which delayed our arrival for some time.

I had remained some steps behind, when I presently saw Captain Nemo coming hurriedly towards me. With his strong hand he bent me to the ground, his companion doing the same to Conseil. At first I knew not what to think of this sudden attack, but I was soon reassured by seeing the Captain lie down beside me, and remain immovable.

I was stretched on the ground, just under shelter of a bush of algæ, when raising my head, I saw some enormous mass, casting phosphorescent gleams, pass blustering by.

My blood froze in my veins as I recognized two formidable sharks which threatened us. It was a couple of tintoreas, terrible creatures, with enormous tails and a dull glassy stare, the phosphorescent matter ejected from holes pierced around the muzzle. Monstrous brutes! which would crush a whole man in their iron jaws. I did not know whether Conseil stopped to

classify them; for my part, I noticed their silver bellies, and their huge mouths bristling with teeth, from a very unscientific point of view, and more as a possible victim than as a naturalist.

Happily the voracious creatures do not see well. They passed without seeing us, brushing us with their brownish fins, and we escaped by a miracle from a danger certainly greater than meeting a tiger full-face in the forest. Half an hour after, guided by the electric light, we reached the *Nautilus*. The outside door had been left open, and Captain Nemo closed it as soon as we had entered the first cell. He then pressed a knob. I heard the pumps working in the midst of the vessel, I felt the water sinking from around me, and in a few moments the cell was entirely empty. The inside door then opened, and we entered the vestry.

There our diving-dress was taken off, not without some trouble; and, fairly worn out from want of food and sleep, I returned to my room, in great wonder at this surprising excursion at the bottom of the sea.



Pursued by Bloodhounds

CHARLES READE

GHYSBRECHT VAN SWIETEN, the burgomaster of Tergou, in Holland, is the enemy of Gerard Eliassen and Margaret Brandt. When Gerard escapes from captivity he is pursued by the burgomaster and his men, but Gerard and Margaret are helped by an old friend, Martin Wittenhaagen, a veteran of the Dutch wars. With Peter Brandt, Margaret's father, he had planned Gerard's rescue and they had rested at Peter's house. But the burgomaster's men come with bloodhounds to round up the fugitives, and prevent Gerard escaping from Holland and reaching Italy. How the bloodhounds are defeated and how Margaret employs a brave strategy of her own is a tale that is typical of the many adventures Gerard and Margaret have to undergo in *The Cloister and the Hearth*, from which this story is taken.

Gerard, warned by recent peril, rose before daybreak and waked Martin. The old soldier, being consulted as to the best way to leave the country and elude pursuit, said there was but one road safe. "I must guide you through the great forest to a bridle-road I know of. This will take you speedily to a hostelry where they will lend you a swift horse; and then a day's gallop will take you out of Holland. But let us start ere the folk here quit their beds."

Peter's house was but a furlong and a half from the forest. They started, Martin with his bow and three arrows, for it was Thursday; Gerard with nothing but a stout oak staff Peter gave him for the journey.

Margaret pinned up her kirtle and farthingale, for the road was wet. Peter went as far as his garden hedge with them, and then with more emotion than he often bestowed on passing events, gave the young man his blessing.

The sun was peeping above the horizon as they crossed the stony field and made for the wood. They had crossed about half, when Margaret, who kept nervously looking back every now and then, uttered a cry, and, following her instinct, began to run towards the wood, screaming with terror all the way.

Ghysbrecht and his men were in hot pursuit.

Resistance would have been madness. Martin and Gerard followed Margaret's example. The pursuers gained slightly on them; but Martin kept shouting, "Only win the wood! only win the wood!"

They had too good a start for the men on foot, and their hearts bounded with hope at Martin's words, for the great trees seemed now to stretch their branches like friendly arms towards them, and their leaves like a screen.

But an unforeseen danger attacked them. The fiery old burgo-master flung himself on his mule, and, spurring him to a gallop, he headed not his own men only, but the fugitives. His object was to cut them off. The old man came galloping in a semicircle, and got on the edge of the wood, right in front of Gerard; the others might escape for aught he cared.

Margaret shrieked, and tried to protect Gerard by clasping him; but he shook her off without ceremony.

Ghysbrecht in his ardour forgot that hunted animals turn on

the hunter; and that two men can hate, and two can long to kill the thing they hate.

Instead of attempting to dodge him, as the burgomaster made sure he would, Gerard flew right at him, with a savage, exulting cry, and struck at him with all his heart, and soul and strength. The oak staff came down on Ghysbrecht's face with a frightful crash, and laid him under his mule's tail beating the devil's tattoo with his heels, his face streaming, and his collar spattered with blood.

The next moment the three were in the wood. The yell of dismay and vengeance that burst from Ghysbrecht's men at that terrible blow which felled their leader, told the fugitives that it was now a race for life or death.

"Why run?" cried Gerard, panting. "You have your bow, and I have this," and he shook his bloody staff.

"Boy!" roared Martin; "the GALLOWS! Follow me," and he fled into the wood. Soon they heard a cry like a pack of hounds opening on sight of the game. The men were in the wood, and saw them flitting amongst the trees. Margaret moaned and panted as she ran; and Gerard clenched his teeth and grasped his staff. The next minute they came to a stiff hazel coppice. Martin dashed into it, and shouldered the young wood aside as if it were standing corn.

Ere they had gone fifty yards in it they came to four blind paths.

Martin took one. "Bend low," said he. And, half creeping, they glided along. Presently their path was again intersected with other little tortuous paths. They took one of them. It seemed to lead back; but it soon took a turn, and, after a while, brought them to a thick pine grove, where the walking was good and hard. There were no paths here; and the young fir-trees were so thick, you could not see three yards before your nose.

When they had gone some way in this, Martin sat down; and, having learned in war to lose all impression of danger with the danger itself, took a piece of bread and a slice of ham out of his wallet, and began quietly to eat his breakfast.

The young ones looked at him with dismay. He replied to their looks.

"All Sevenbergen could not find you now; you will lose your purse, Gerard, long before you get to Italy; is that the way to carry a purse?"

Gerard looked, and there was a large triangular purse, entangled by its chains to the buckle and strap of his wallet.

"This is none of mine," said he. "What is in it, I wonder?" and he tried to detach it; but in passing through the coppice it had become inextricably entangled in his strap and buckle. "It seems loath to leave me," said Gerard, and he had to cut it loose with his knife. The purse, on examination, proved to be well provided with silver coins of all sizes, but its bloated appearance was greatly owing to a number of pieces of brown paper folded and doubled.

The wonder was how the purse came on Gerard.

They hit at last upon the right solution. The purse must have been at Ghysbrecht's saddle-bow, and Gerard rushing at his enemy, had unconsciously torn it away, thus felling his enemy and robbing him, with a single gesture.

Gerard was delighted at this feat, but Margaret was uneasy.

"Throw it away, Gerard, or let Martin take it back. Already they call you a thief. I cannot bear it."

"Throw it away! give it him back? not a stiver! This is spoil lawfully won in battle from an enemy. Is it not, Martin?"

"Why, of course. Send him back the brown paper, and you will; but the purse or the coin—that were a sin."

"Oh, Gerard!" said Margaret, "you are going to a distant land. We need the goodwill of Heaven. How can we hope for that if we take what is not ours?"

But Gerard saw it in a different light.

"It is Heaven that gives it me by a miracle, and I shall cherish it accordingly. Thus the favoured people spoiled the Egyptians, and were blessed."

"Take your own way," said Margaret humbly; "you are wiser than I am."

Gerard kissed her tenderly and they pursued their journey hand in hand, Martin leading the way, into the depths of the huge forest. The farther they went, the more absolutely secure from pursuit they felt. Indeed, the townspeople never ventured so far as this into the trackless part of the forest.

Impetuous natures repent quickly. Gerard was no sooner out of all danger than his conscience began to prick him.

"Martin, would I had not struck quite so hard."

"Whom? Oh! let that pass; he is cheap served."

"Martin, I saw his grey hairs as my stick fell on him. I doubt they will not from my sight this while."

Martin grunted with contempt. "Who spares a badger for his grey hairs? The greyer your enemy is, the older; and the older the craftier; and the craftier the better for a little killing."

"Killing? killing, Martin? Speak not of killing!" and Gerard shook all over.

"I am much mistook if you have not," said Martin cheerfully.

"Now Heaven forbid!"

"The old vagabond's skull cracked like a walnut. Aha!"

"Heaven and the saints forbid it!"

"He rolled off his mule like a stone shot out of a cart. Said I to myself, 'There is one wiped out,' " and the iron old soldier grinned ruthlessly.

Gerard fell on his knees and began to pray for his enemy's life.

At this Martin lost his patience. "Here's mummary. What! you that set up for learning, know you not that a wise man never strikes his enemy but to kill him? And what is all this coil about killing of old men? If it had been a young one, now, with the joys of life waiting for him, wine, women, and pillage! But an old fellow at the edge of the grave, why *not* shove him in? Go he must, today or tomorrow; and what better place for grey-beards? Now, if ever I should be so mischancy as to last so long as Ghysbrecht did, and have to go on a mule's legs instead of Martin Wittenhaagen's, and a back like this (striking the wood of his bow), instead of this (striking the string), I'll thank and bless any young fellow who will knock me on the head, as you have done that old shopkeeper; malison on his memory."

"Oh, culpa mea! culpa mea!" cried Gerard, and smote upon his breast.

Margaret wreathed her arms round Gerard, and comforted him.

"Sweetheart!" murmured she, "you forget: you went not a step out of the way to harm him, who hunted you to your death. You fled from him. He it was who spurred on you. Then did you

strike; but in self-defence and a single blow, and with that which was in your hand. Malice had drawn knife, or struck again and again. How often have men been smitten with staves not one but many blows, yet no lives lost! If then your enemy has fallen, it is through his own malice, not yours, and by the will of God."

"Bless you, Margaret; bless you for thinking so!"

"Yes; but, beloved one, if you have had the *misfortune* to kill that wicked man, the more need is there that you fly with haste from Holland. Oh, let us on."

"Nay, Margaret," said Gerard. "I fear not man's vengeance, thanks to Martin here and this thick wood: only Him I fear whose eye pierces the forest and reads the heart of man. If I but struck in self-defence, 'tis well; but if in hate, He may bid the avenger of blood follow me to Italy—to Italy? ay, to earth's remotest bounds."

"Hush!" said Martin peevishly. "I can't hear for your chat."

"What is it?"

"Do you hear nothing, Margaret; my ears are getting old."

Margaret listened, and presently she heard a tuneful sound, like a single stroke upon a deep ringing bell. She described it so to Martin.

"Nay, I heard it," said he.

"And so did I," said Gerard; "it was beautiful. Ah! there it is again. How sweetly it blends with the air. It is a long way off. It is before us, is it not?"

"No, no! the echoes of this wood confound the ear of a stranger. It comes from the pine grove."

"What! the one we passed?"

"Why, Martin, is this *anything*? You look pale."

"Wonderful!" said Martin, with a sickly sneer. "He asks me is it *anything*? Come, on, on! at any rate, let us reach a better place than this."

"A better place—for what?"

"To stand at bay, Gerard," said Martin gravely; "and die like soldiers, killing three for one."

"What's that sound?"

"IT IS THE AVENGER OF BLOOD."

"Oh, Martin, save him! Oh, Heaven be merciful! What new mysterious peril is this?"

"GIRL, IT'S A BLOODHOUND."

The courage, like the talent, of common men, runs in a narrow groove. Take them but an inch out of that, and they are done. Martin's courage was perfect as far as it went. He had met and baffled many dangers in the course of his rude life, and these familiar dangers he could face with Spartan fortitude, almost with indifference; but he had never been hunted by a bloodhound, nor had he ever seen that brute's unerring instinct baffled by human cunning. Here then a sense of the supernatural combined with novelty to unsteel his heart. After going a few steps, he leaned on his bow, and energy and hope oozed out of him. Gerard, to whom the danger appeared slight in proportion as it was distant, urged him to flight.

"What avails it?" said Martin sadly; "if we get clear of the wood we shall die cheap; here, hard by, I know a place where we may die dear."

"Alas! good Martin," cried Gerard, "despair not so quickly; there must be some way to escape."

"Oh, Martin!" cried Margaret, "what if we were to part company? Gerard's life alone is forfeit. Is there no way to draw the pursuit on us twain and let him go safe?"

"Girl, you know not the bloodhound's nature. He is not on this man's track or that; he is on the track of blood. My life on't they have taken him to where Ghysbrecht fell, and from the dead man's blood to the man that shed it that cursed hound will lead them, though Gerard should run through an army or swim the Meuse." And again he leaned upon his bow, and his head sank.

The hound's mellow voice rang through the wood.

Whilst the men were thus benumbed, the woman's brain was all activity. The man she loved was in danger.

"Lend me your knife," said she to Martin. He gave it her.

"But 'twill be little use in your hands," said he.

Then Margaret did a sly thing. She stepped behind Gerard, and furtively drew the knife across her arm, and made it bleed freely; then stooping, smeared her hose and shoes; and still as the blood trickled she smeared them; but so adroitly that neither Gerard nor Martin saw. Then she seized the soldier's arm.

"Come, be a man!" she said, "and let this end. Take us to some thick place, where numbers will not avail our foes."

"I am going," said Martin sulkily. "Hurry avails not; we cannot shun the hound, and the place is hard by;" then turning to the left, he led the way, as men go to execution.

He soon brought them to a thick hazel coppice, like the one that had favoured their escape in the morning.

"There," said he, "this is but a furlong broad, but it will serve our turn."

"What are we to do?"

"Get through this, and wait on the other side; then as they come straggling through, shoot three, knock two on the head, and the rest will kill us."

"Is that all you can think of?" said Gerard.

"That is all."

"Then, Martin Wittenhaagen, I take the lead, for you have lost your head. Come, can you obey so young a man as I am?"

"Oh, yes, Martin," cried Margaret, "do not gainsay Gerard! He is wiser than his years."

Martin yielded a sullen assent.

"Do then as you see me do," said Gerard; and drawing his huge knife, he cut at every step a hazel shoot or two close by the ground, and turning round twisted them breast-high behind him among the standing shoots. Martin did the same, but with a dogged hopeless air. When they had thus painfully travelled through the greater part of the coppice, the bloodhound's deep bay came nearer and nearer, less and less musical, louder and sterner.

Margaret trembled.

Martin went down on his stomach and listened.

"I hear a horse's feet."

"No," said Gerard; "I doubt it is a mule's. That cursed Ghysbrecht is still alive: none other would follow me up so bitterly."

"Never strike your enemy but to slay him," said Martin gloomily.

"I'll hit harder this time, if Heaven gives me the chance," said Gerard.

At last they worked through the coppice, and there was an

open wood. The trees were large, but far apart, and no escape possible that way.

And now with the hound's bay mingled a score of voices hooping and hallooing.

"The whole village is out after us," said Martin.

"I care not," said Gerard. "Listen, Martin. I have made the track smooth to the dog, but rough to the men, that we may deal with them apart. Thus the hound will gain on the men, and as soon as he comes out of the coppice we must kill him."

"The hound? There are more than one."

"I hear but one."

"Ay! but one speaks, the others run mute; but let the leading hound lose the scent, then another shall give tongue. There will be two dogs, at least, or devils in dog's hides."

"Then we must kill two instead of one. The moment they are dead, into the coppice again, and go right back."

"That is a good thought, Gerard," said Martin, plucking up heart.

"Hush! the men are in the wood."

Gerard now gave his orders in a whisper.

"Stand you with your bow by the side of the coppice—there, in the ditch. I will go but a few yards to yon oak-tree, and hide behind it; the dogs will follow me, and, as they come out, shoot as many as you can, the rest will I brain as they come round the tree."

Martin's eye flashed. They took up their places.

The hooping and hallooing came closer and closer, and soon even the rustling of the young wood was heard, and every now and then the unerring bloodhound gave a single bay.

It was terrible! the branches rustling nearer and nearer, and the inevitable struggle for life and death coming on minute by minute, and that death-knell leading it. A trembling hand was laid on Gerard's shoulder. It made him start violently, strung up as he was.

"Martin says if we are forced to part company, make for that high ash-tree we came in by."

"Yes! yes! yes! but go back for Heaven's sake! don't come here, all out in the open!"

She ran back towards Martin; but, ere she could get to him,

suddenly a huge dog burst out of the coppice, and stood erect a moment. Margaret cowered with fear, but he never noticed her. Scent was to him what sight is to us. He lowered his nose an instant, and the next moment, with an awful yell, sprang straight at Gerard's tree and rolled head-over-heels dead as a stone, literally spitted with an arrow from the bow that twanged beside the coppice in Martin's hand. That same moment out came another hound and smelt his dead comrade. Gerald rushed out at him; but ere he could use his cudgel, a streak of white lightning seemed to strike the hound, and he grovelled in the dust, wounded desperately, but not killed, and howling piteously.

Gerard had not time to despatch him: the coppice rustled too near: it seemed alive. Pointing wildly to Martin to go back, Gerard ran a few yards to the right, then crept cautiously into the thick coppice just as three men burst out. These had headed their comrades considerably: the rest were following at various distances. Gerard crawled back almost on all-fours. Instinct taught Martin and Margaret to do the same upon their line of retreat. Thus, within the distance of a few yards, the pursuers and pursued were passing one another upon opposite tracks.

A loud cry announced the discovery of the dead and the wounded hound. Then followed a babble of voices, still swelling as fresh pursuers reached the spot. The hunters, as usual on a surprise, were wasting time, and the hunted ones were making the most of it.

"I hear no more hounds," whispered Martin to Margaret, and he was himself again.

It was Margaret's turn to tremble and despair.

"Oh, why did we part with Gerard? They will kill my Gerard, and I not near him."

"Nay, nay! the head to catch him is not on their shoulders. You bade him meet us at the ash-tree?"

"And so I did. Bless you, Martin, for thinking of that. To the ash-tree!"

"Ay! but with less noise."

They were now nearly at the edge of the coppice, when suddenly they heard hooping and hallooing behind them. The men had satisfied themselves the fugitives were in the coppice, and were beating back.

"No matter," whispered Martin to his trembling companion. "We shall have time to win clear and slip back out of sight by hard running. Ah!"

He stooped suddenly; for just as he was going to burst out of the brushwood, his eye caught a figure keeping sentinel. It was Ghysbrecht Van Swieten seated on his mule; a bloody bandage was across his nose, the bridge of which was broken; but over this his eyes peered keenly, and it was plain by their expression he had heard the fugitives rustle, and was looking out for them. Martin muttered a terrible oath, and cautiously strung his bow, then with equal caution fitted his last arrow to the string. Margaret put her hands to her face, but said nothing. She saw this man must die or Gerard. After the first impulse she peered through her fingers, her heart panting to her throat.

The bow was raised, and the deadly arrow steadily drawn to its head, when at that moment an active figure leaped on Ghysbrecht from behind so swiftly, it was like a hawk swooping on a pigeon. A kerchief went over the burgomaster, in a turn of the hand his head was muffled in it, and he was whirled from his seat and fell heavily upon the ground, where he lay groaning with terror; and Gerard jumped down after him.

"Hist, Martin! Martin!"

Martin and Margaret came out, the former open-mouthed, crying, "Now fly! fly! while they are all in the thicket; we are saved."

At this crisis, when safety seemed at hand, as fate would have it, Margaret, who had borne up so bravely till now, began to succumb, partly from loss of blood.

"Oh, my beloved, fly!" she gasped. "Leave me, for I am faint."

"No! no!" cried Gerard. "Death together, or safety. Ah! the mule! mount her, you, and I'll run by your side."

In a moment Martin was on Ghysbrecht's mule, and Gerard raised the fainting girl in his arms and placed her on the saddle, and relieved Martin of his bow.

"Help! treason! murder! murder!" shrieked Ghysbrecht, suddenly rising on his hams.

"Silence, cur," roared Gerard, and trode him down again by the throat as men crush an adder.

"Now, have you got her firm? Then fly! for our lives! for our lives!"

But even as the mule, urged suddenly by Martin's heel, scattered the flints with his hind hoofs ere he got into a canter, and even as Gerard withdrew his foot from Ghysbrecht's throat to run, Dierich Brower and his five men, who had come back for orders, and heard the burgomaster's cries, burst roaring out of the coppice on them.

There was something terrible and truly animal, both in the roar of triumph with which the pursuers burst out of the thicket on our fugitives, and the sharp cry of terror with which these latter darted away. The pursuers' hands clutched the empty air, scarce two feet behind them, as they fled for life. Confused for a moment, like lions that miss their spring, Dierich and his men let Gerard and the mule put ten yards between them. Then they flew after with uplifted weapons. They were sure of catching them; for this was not the first time the parties had measured speed. In the open ground they had gained visibly on the three this morning, and now, at last, it was a fair race again, to be settled by speed alone. A hundred yards were covered in no time. Yet still there remained these ten yards between the pursuers and the pursued.

This increase of speed since the morning puzzled Dierich Brower. The reason was this. When three run in company, the pace is that of the slowest of the three. From Peter's house to the edge of the forest Gerard ran Margaret's pace; but now he ran his own; for the mule was fleet, and could have left them all far behind. Moreover, youth and chaste living began to tell. Daylight grew imperceptibly between the hunted ones and the hunters. Then Dierich made a desperate effort, and gained two yards; but in a few seconds Gerard had stolen them quietly back. The pursuers began to curse.

Martin heard, and his face lighted up. "Courage, Gerard! courage, brave lad! they are straggling."

It was so. Dierich was now headed by one of his men, and another dropped into the rear altogether.

They came to a rising ground, not sharp, but long; and here youth, and grit, and sober living told more than ever.

Ere he reached the top, Dierich's forty years weighed him

down like forty bullets. "Our cake is dough," he gasped. "Take him dead, if you can't alive;" and he left running, and followed at a foot's pace. Jorian Ketel tailed off next; and then another, and so, one by one, Gerard ran them all to a standstill, except one who kept on staunch as a bloodhound, though losing ground every minute. His name, if I am not mistaken, was Eric Wouverman. Followed by him, they came to a rise in the wood, shorter, but much steeper than the last.

"Hand on mane!" cried Martin.

Gerard obeyed, and the mule helped him up the hill faster even than he was running before.

At the sight of this manœuvre, Dierich's man lost heart, and, being now full eighty yards behind Gerard, and rather more than that in advance of his nearest comrade, he pulled up short, and, in obedience to Dierich's order, took down his crossbow, levelled it deliberately, and just as the trio were sinking out of sight over the crest of the hill, sent the bolt whizzing among them.

There was a cry of dismay; and, next moment, as if a thunderbolt had fallen on them, they were all lying on the ground, mule and all.

The effect was so sudden and magical, that the shooter himself was stupefied for an instant. Then he hailed his companions to join him in effecting the capture, and himself set off up the hill; but, ere he had got half way, up rose the figure of Martin Wittenhaagen with a bent bow in his hand. Eric Wouverman no sooner saw him in this attitude, than he darted behind a tree, and made himself as small as possible. Martin's skill with that weapon was well known, and the slain dog was a keen reminder of it.

Wouverman peered round the bark cautiously: there was the arrow's point still aimed at him. He saw it shine. He dared not move from his shelter.

When he had been at peep-bo some minutes, his companions came up in great force.

Then, with a scornful laugh, Martin vanished, and presently was heard to ride off on the mule.

All the men ran up together. The high ground commanded a view of a narrow but almost interminable glade.

They saw Gerard and Margaret running along at a prodigious distance; they looked like gnats; and Martin galloping after them *ventre à terre*.

The hunters were outwitted as well as outrun. A few words will explain Martin's conduct. We arrive at causes by noting coincidences; yet, now and then, coincidences are deceitful. As we have all seen a hare tumble over a briar just as the gun went off, and so raise expectations, then dash them to earth by scudding away untouched, so the burgomaster's mule put her foot in a rabbit-hole at or about the time the crossbow bolt whizzed innocuous over her head: she fell and threw both her riders. Gerard caught Margaret, but was carried down by her weight and impetus.

The docile mule was up again directly, and stood trembling. Martin was next, and looking round saw there was but one in pursuit; on this he made the young lovers fly on foot, while he checked the enemy.

He now galloped after his companions, and when after a long race he caught them, he instantly put Gerard and Margaret on the mule, and ran by their side till his breath failed, then took his turn to ride, and so in rotation. Thus the runner was always fresh, and long ere they relaxed their speed all sound and trace of them was hopelessly lost to Dierich and his men. These latter went crestfallen back to look after their chief and their winged bloodhound.

But presently Gerard found stains of blood on Margaret's ankles.

"Martin! Martin! help! they have wounded her: the crossbow!"

"No, no!" said Margaret, smiling to reassure him; "I am not wounded, nor hurt at all."

"But what is it, then, in Heaven's name?" cried Gerard, in great agitation.

"Scold me not, then!" and Margaret blushed.

"Did I ever scold you?"

"No, dear Gerard. Well, then, Martin said it was blood those cruel dogs followed; so I thought if I could but have a little blood on my shoon, the dogs would follow me instead, and let my Gerard wend free. So I scratched my arm with Martin's

knife—forgive me! Whose else could I take? Yours, Gerard? Ah, no. You forgive me?” said she beseechingly, and lovingly and fawningly, all in one.

“Let me see this scratch first,” said Gerard, choking with emotion. “There, I thought so. A scratch? I call it a cut—a deep, terrible, cruel cut.”

Margaret smiled with love ineffable. “Foolish Gerard,” murmured she, “to make so much of nothing.” And she flung the guilty arm round his neck. “As if I would not give all the blood in my heart for you, let alone a few drops from my arm.”

Suddenly they emerged upon a beaten path, and Martin stopped.

“This is the bridle-road I spoke of,” said he, hanging his head; “and there away lies the hostelry.”

Margaret and Gerard cast a scared look at one another.

“Come a step with me, Martin,” whispered Gerard. When he had drawn him aside, he said to him in a broken voice, “Good Martin, watch over her for me! See Martin! here is gold—it was for my journey; it is no use my asking her to take it—she would not; but you will for her, will you not? Oh, Heaven! and is this all I can do for her? Money? But poverty is a curse. You will not let her want for anything, dear Martin? The burgo-master’s silver is enough for me.”

“Thou art a good lad, Gerard. Neither want nor harm shall come to her. I care more for her little finger than for all the world; and were she nought to me, even for thy sake would I be a father to her. Go with a stout heart, and God be with thee going and coming.” And the rough soldier wrung Gerard’s hand, and turned his head away, with unwonted feeling.

After a moment’s silence he was for going back to Margaret, but Gerard stopped him. “No, good Martin; prithee, stay here behind this thicket, and turn your head away from us, while I—oh, Martin! Martin!”

Gerard, severed from her he loved, went like one in a dream. He hired a horse and a guide at the little hostelry, and rode swiftly towards the German frontier. But all was mechanical; his senses felt blunted; trees and houses and men moved by him like objects seen through a veil. His companion spoke to him

twice, but he did not answer. Only once he cried out savagely, "Shall we never be out of this hateful country?"

After many hours' riding they came to the brow of a steep hill; a small brook ran at the bottom.

"Halt!" cried the guide, and pointed across the valley. "Here is Germany."

"Where?"

"On t'other side of the bourn. No need to ride down the hill, I trow."

Gerard dismounted without a word, and took the burgo-master's purse from his girdle: while he opened it, "You will soon be out of this hateful country," said his guide, half sulkily; "mayhap the one you are going to will like you no better; any way, though it be a church you have robbed, they cannot take you, once across that bourn."

These words at another time would have earned the speaker an admonition or a cuff. They fell on Gerard now like idle air. He paid the lad in silence, and descended the hill alone. The brook was silvery; it ran murmuring over little pebbles, that glittered, varnished by the clear water; he sat down and looked stupidly at them. Then he drank of the brook; then he laved his hot feet and hands in it; it was very cold: it waked him. He rose, and taking a run, leaped across it into Germany. Even as he touched the strange land he turned suddenly and looked back. He drooped suddenly with arms and legs all weak, and sat down and sobbed bitterly upon the foreign soil.



An African Caravan

DANIEL DEFOE

CAPTAIN SINGLETON was an Englishman who had very many more adventures than Robinson Crusoe, and lived to encounter even greater hazards and dangers. The same author created both characters. Here we see Singleton forced to help his comrades in building a new ship of their own, something Crusoe also contrived although on a smaller scale, and then they set out for the African mainland, only to run into trouble with the natives, and give Singleton a chance to prove himself a born leader, although much younger than most of his companions. Eventually a curious caravan sets out to cross Africa, and it continues until it arrives at a giant waterfall. Singleton's other incredible adventures are all told in the book named for him, *Captain Singleton*, from which this story is taken.

I kept no journal of this voyage, nor indeed did I all this while understand anything of navigation, more than the common business of a foremast-man; so I can say nothing to the latitudes or distances of any places we were at, how long we were going, or how far we sailed in a day; but this I remember, that being now come round the island, we sailed up the eastern shore due south, as we had done down the western shore due north before.

We continued our voyage south for many weeks, though with several intervals of going on shore to get provisions and water. At length, coming round a point of land which lay about a league further than ordinary into the sea, we were agreeably surprised with a sight which, no doubt, had been as disagreeable to those concerned, as it was pleasant to us. This was the wreck of an European ship, which had been cast away upon the rocks, which in that place run a great way into the sea.

We could see plainly, at low water, a great deal of the ship lay dry; even at high water, she was not entirely covered; and that at most she did not lie above a league from the shore. It will easily be believed that our curiosity led us, the wind and weather also permitting, to go directly to her, which we did without any difficulty, and presently found that it was a Dutch-built ship, and that she could not have been very long in that condition, a great deal of the upper work of her stern remaining firm, with the mizzen-mast standing.

It was a very pleasant sight to us when, coming on shore, we saw all the marks and tokens of a ship-carpenter's yard; as a launch-block and cradles, scaffolds and planks, and pieces of planks, the remains of the building a ship or vessel; and, in a word, a great many things that fairly invited us to go about the same work; and we soon came to understand that the men belonging to the ship that was lost had saved themselves on shore, perhaps in their boats, and had built themselves a barque or sloop, and so were gone to sea again, so we resolved that we would try if possible to build us a boat of one kind or other, and go to sea as our fate should direct.

To be short, we spent four months here, and worked very hard too; at the end of which time we launched our frigate, which, in a few words, had many defects, but yet, all things considered, it was as well as we could expect it to be.

In short, it was a kind of sloop, of the burthen of near eighteen or twenty tons; and had we had masts and sails, standing and running rigging, as is usual in such cases, and other conveniences, the vessel might have carried us wherever we could have had a mind to go; but of all the materials we wanted, this was the worst, viz., that we had no tar or pitch to pay the seams and secure the bottom; and though we did what we could, with tallow and oil, to make a mixture to supply that part, yet we could not bring it to answer our end fully; and when we launched her into the water, she was so leaky, and took in the water so fast, that we thought all our labour had been lost, for we had much ado to make her swim; and as for pumps, we had none, nor had we any means to make one.

But at length one of the natives, a black negro-man, showed us a tree, the wood of which being put into the fire, sends forth a liquid that is as glutinous and almost as strong as tar, and of which, by boiling, we made a sort of stuff which served us for pitch, and this answered our end effectually; for we perfectly made our vessel sound and tight, so that we wanted no pitch or tar at all. This secret has stood me in stead upon many occasions since that time in the same place.

Our vessel being thus finished, out of the mizzen-mast of the ship we made a very good mast to her, and fitted our sails to it as well as we could; then we made a rudder and tiller, and, in a word, everything that our present necessity called upon us for; and having victualled her, and put as much fresh water on board as we thought we wanted, or as we knew how to stow (for we were yet without casks), we put to sea with a fair wind.

We had been eight or nine days under sail when, to our great joy, one of our men cried out "Land!" We had great reason to be glad of the discovery, for we had not water enough left for above two or three days more, though at a short allowance. However, though it was early in the morning when we discovered it, we made it near night before we reached it, the wind slackening almost to a calm, and our ship being, as I said, a very dull sailer.

At length we came to a very large bay, and in it several little creeks or rivers emptying themselves into the sea, and we ran boldly into the first creek we came at; where, seeing some huts

and wild people about them on the shore, we ran our vessel into a little cove on the north side of the creek, and held up a long pole, with a white bit of cloth on it, for a signal of peace to them. We found they understood us presently, for they came flocking to us, men, women, and children, most of them, of both sexes, stark naked. At first they stood wondering and staring at us, as if we had been monsters, and as if they had been frightened; but we found they inclined to be familiar with us afterwards. The first thing we did to try them, was, we held up our hands to our mouths, as if we were to drink, signifying that we wanted water. This they understood presently, and three of their women and two boys ran away up the land, and came back in about half a quarter of an hour, with several pots, made of earth, pretty enough, and baked, I suppose, in the sun; these they brought us full of water, and set them down near the sea-shore, and there left them, going back a little, that we might fetch them, which we did.

Some time after this, they brought us roots and herbs, and some fruits which I cannot remember, and gave us; but as we had nothing to give them, we found them not so free as the people in Madagascar were. However, our cutler went to work, and, as he had saved some iron out of the wreck of the ship, he made abundance of toys, birds, dogs, pins, hooks, and rings; and we helped to file them, and make them bright for him, and when we gave them some of these, they brought us all sorts of provisions they had, such as goats, hogs, and cows, and we got victuals enough.

We were now landed upon the continent of Africa, the most desolate, desert, and inhospitable country in the world, even Greenland and Nova Zembla itself not excepted, with this difference only, that even the worst part of it we found inhabited, though, taking the nature and quality of some of the inhabitants, it might have been much better to us if there had been none.

And, to add to the exclamation I am making on the nature of the place, it was here that we took one of the rashest, and wildest, and most desperate resolutions that ever was taken by man, or any number of men, in the world; this was, to travel overland through the heart of the country, from the coast of Mozambique, on the east ocean, to the coast of Angola or Guinea, on

the western or Atlantic Ocean, a continent of land of at least 1800 miles, in which journey we had excessive heats to support, unpassable deserts to go over, no carriages, camels, or beasts of any kind to carry our baggage, innumerable numbers of wild and ravenous beasts to encounter with, such as lions, leopards, tigers, lizards, and elephants; we had the equinoctial line to pass under, and, consequently, were in the very centre of the torrid zone; we had nations of savages to encounter with, barbarous and brutish to the last degree; hunger and thirst to struggle with, and, in one word, terrors enough to have daunted the stoutest hearts that ever were placed in cases of flesh and blood.

Yet, fearless of all these, we resolved to adventure, and accordingly made such preparations for our journey as the place we were in would allow us, and such as our little experience of the country seemed to dictate to us.

It had been some time already that we had been used to tread barefooted upon the rocks, the gravel, the grass, and the sand on the shore; but as we found the worst thing for our feet was the walking or travelling on the dry burning sands, within the country, so we provided ourselves with a sort of shoes, made of the skins of wild beasts, with the hair inward, and being dried in the sun, the outsides were thick and hard, and would last a great while. In short, as I called them, so I think the term very proper still, we made us gloves for our feet, and we found them very convenient and very comfortable.

We conversed with some of the natives of the country, who were friendly enough. What tongue they spoke I do not yet pretend to know. We talked as far as we could make them understand us, not only about our provisions, but also about our undertaking, and asked them what country lay that way, pointing west with our hands. They told us but little to our purpose, only we thought, by all their discourse, that there were people to be found, of one sort or other, everywhere; that there were many great rivers, many lions and tigers, elephants, and furious wild cats (which in the end we found to be civet cats), and the like.

When we asked them if any one had ever travelled that way, they told us yes, some had gone to where the sun sleeps, meaning to the west, but they could not tell us who they were. When

we asked for some to guide us, they shrunk up their shoulders as Frenchmen do when they are afraid to undertake a thing. When we asked them about the lions and wild creatures, they laughed, and let us know that they would do us no hurt, and directed us to a good way indeed to deal with them, and that was to make some fire, which would always fright them away; and so indeed we found it.

Our aim was for the coast of Angola, which, by the charts we had, lying very near the same latitude we were then in, our course thither was due west; and as we were assured we should meet with rivers, we doubted not but that by their help we might ease our journey, especially if we could find means to cross the great lake, or inland sea, which the natives call Coalmucoa, out of which it is said the river Nile has its source or beginning.

The next thing we had to consider was, how to carry our baggage, which we were first of all determined not to travel without; neither indeed was it possible for us to do so, for even our ammunition, which was absolutely necessary to us, and on which our subsistence, I mean for food, as well as our safety, and particularly our defence against wild beasts and wild men, depended—I say, even our ammunition was a load too heavy for us to carry in a country where the heat was such that we should be load enough for ourselves.

As our little traffic with the natives was hitherto upon the faith of their first kindness, we found some knavery among them at last; for having bought some cattle of them for our toys, which, as I said, our cutler had contrived, one of our men differing with his chapman, truly they huffed him in their manner, and, keeping the things he had offered them for the cattle, made their fellows drive away the cattle before his face, and laugh at him. Our man crying out loud of this violence, and calling to some of us who were not far off, the negro he was dealing with threw a lance at him, which came so true, that, if he had not with great agility jumped aside, and held up his hand also to turn the lance as it came, it had struck through his body; and, as it was, it wounded him in the arm; at which the man, took up his fuzee, and shot the negro through the heart.

The others that were near him, and all those that were with us at a distance, were so terribly frightened, first, at the flash of

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The others that were near him, and all those that were with us at a distance, were so terribly frightened, first, at the flash of

fire; secondly, at the noise; and thirdly, at seeing their countryman killed, that they stood like men stupid and amazed, at first, for some time; but after they were a little recovered from their fright, one of them, at a good distance from us, set up a sudden screaming noise, which, it seems, is the noise they make when they go to fight; and all the rest understanding what he meant, answered him, and ran together to the place where he was, and we not knowing what it meant, stood still, looking upon one another like a parcel of fools.

But we were presently undeceived; for, in two or three minutes more, we heard the screaming, roaring noise go on from one place to another, through all their little towns; nay, even over the creek to the other side; and, on a sudden we saw a naked multitude running from all parts to the place where the first man began it, as to a rendezvous; and, in less than an hour, I believe there was near 500 of them gotten together, armed some with bows and arrows, but most with lances, which they throw at a good distance, so nicely that they will strike a bird flying.

We had but a very little time for consultation, for the multitude was increasing every moment; and I verily believe, if we had stayed long, they would have been 10,000 together in a little time. We had nothing to do, therefore, but to fly to our ship or bark, where indeed we could have defended ourselves very well, or to advance and try what a volley or two of small shot would do for us.

We resolved immediately upon the latter, depending upon it that the fire and terror of our shot would soon put them to flight; so we drew up all in a line, and marched boldly up to them. They stood ready to meet us, depending, I suppose, to destroy us all with their lances; but before we came near enough for them to throw their lances, we halted, and, standing at a good distance from one another, to stretch our line as far as we could, we gave them a salute with our shot, which, besides what we wounded that we knew not of, knocked sixteen of them down upon the spot, and three more were so lamed, that they fell about twenty or thirty yards from them.

As soon as we had fired, they set up the horridest yell, or howling, partly raised by those that were wounded, and partly

by those that pitied and condoled the bodies they saw lie dead, that I never heard anything like it before or since.

We stood stock still after we had fired, to load our guns again, and finding they did not stir from the place, we fired among them again; we killed about nine of them at the second fire; but as they did not stand so thick as before, all our men did not fire, seven of us being ordered to reserve our charge, and to advance as soon as the other had fired, while the rest loaded again; of which I shall speak again presently.

As soon as we had fired the second volley, we shouted as loud as we could, and the seven men advanced upon them, and, coming about twenty yards nearer, fired again, and those that were behind having loaded again with all expedition, followed; but when they saw us advance, they ran screaming away as if they were bewitched.

When we came up to the field of battle, we saw a great number of bodies lying upon the ground, many more than we could suppose were killed or wounded; nay, more than we had bullets in our pieces when we fired; and we could not tell what to make of it; but at length we found how it was, viz., that they were frightened out of all manner of sense; nay, I do believe several of those that were really dead, were frightened to death, and had no wound about them.

Of those that were thus frightened, as I have said, several of them, as they recovered themselves, came and worshipped us (taking us for gods or devils, I know not which, nor did it much matter to us): some kneeling, some throwing themselves flat on the ground, made a thousand antic gestures, but all with tokens of the most profound submission. It presently came into my head, that we might now, by the law of arms, take as many prisoners as we could, and make them travel with us, and carry our baggage. As soon as I proposed it, our men were all of my mind; and accordingly we secured about sixty lusty young fellows and let them know they must go with us; which they seemed very willing to do. But the next question we had among ourselves, was, how we should do to trust them, for we found the people not like those of Madagascar, but fierce, revengeful, and treacherous; for which reason we were sure that we should have no service from them but that of mere slaves; no subjection

that would continue any longer than the fear of us was upon them, nor any labour but by violence.

Before I go any farther, I must hint to the reader, that from this time forward I began to enter a little more seriously into the circumstance I was in, and concerned myself more in the conduct of our affairs; for though my comrades were all older men, yet I began to find them void of counsel, or, as I now call it, presence of mind, when they came to the execution of a thing. The first occasion I took to observe this, was in their late engagement with the natives, when, though they had taken a good resolution to attack them and fire upon them, yet, when they had fired the first time, and found that the negroes did not run as they expected, their hearts began to fail, and I am persuaded, if their bark had been near hand, they would every man have run away.

Upon this occasion I began to take upon me a little to hearten them up, and to call upon them to load again, and give them another volley, telling them that I would engage, if they would be ruled by me, I'd make the negroes run fast enough. I found this heartened them, and therefore, when they fired a second time, I desired them to reserve some of their shot for an attempt by itself, as I mentioned above.

Having fired a second time, I was indeed forced to command, as I may call it. "Now, seigniors," said I, "let us give them a cheer." So I opened my throat, and shouted three times, as our English sailors do on like occasions. "And now follow me," said I to the seven that had not fired, "and I'll warrant you we will make work with them," and so it proved indeed; for, as soon as they saw us coming, away they ran, as above.

From this day forward they would call me nothing but Seignior Capitanio; but I told them I would not be called seignior. "Well, then," said the gunner, who spoke good English, "you shall be called Captain Bob"; and so they gave me my title ever after.

Nothing is more certain of the Portuguese than this: take them nationally or personally, if they are animated and heartened up by anybody to go before, and encourage them by example, they will behave well enough; but if they have nothing but their own measures to follow, they sink immediately: these

men had certainly fled from a parcel of naked savages, though even by flying they could not have saved their lives, if I had not shouted and hallooed, and rather made sport with the thing than a fight, to keep up their courage.

Nor was there less need of it upon several occasions hereafter; and I do confess I have often wondered how a number of men, who, when they came to the extremity, were so ill supported by their own spirits, had at first courage to propose and to undertake the most desperate and impracticable attempt that ever men went about in the world.

There were indeed two or three indefatigable men among them, by whose courage and industry all the rest were upheld; and indeed those two or three were the managers of them from the beginning; that was the gunner, and that cutler whom I call the artist; and the third, who was pretty well, though not like either of them, was one of the carpenters. These indeed were the life and soul of all the rest, and it was to their courage that all the rest owed the resolution they showed upon any occasion. But when those saw me take a little upon me, as above, they embraced me, and treated me with particular affection ever after.

This gunner was an excellent mathematician, a good scholar, and a complete sailor; and it was in conversing intimately with him that I learned afterwards the grounds of what knowledge I have since had in all the sciences useful for navigation, and particularly in the geographical part of knowledge.

Even in our conversation, finding me eager to understand and learn, he laid the foundation of a general knowledge of things in my mind, gave me just ideas of the form of the earth and of the sea, the situation of countries, the course of rivers, the doctrine of the spheres, the motion of the stars; and, in a word, taught me a kind of system of astronomy, which I afterwards improved.

In an especial manner, he filled my head with aspiring thoughts, and with an earnest desire after learning everything that could be taught me; convincing me, that nothing could qualify me for great undertakings, but a degree of learning superior to what was usual in the race of seamen; he told me, that to be ignorant was to be certain of a mean station in the world, but that knowledge was the first step to preferment. He

was always flattering me with my capacity to learn; and though that fed my pride, yet, on the other hand, as I had a secret ambition, which just at that time fed itself in my mind, it prompted in me an insatiable thirst after learning in general, and I resolved, if ever I came back to Europe, and had anything left to purchase it, I would make myself master of all the parts of learning needful to the making of me a complete sailor; but I was not so just to myself afterwards as to do it when I had an opportunity.

But to return to our business; the gunner, when he saw the service I had done in the fight, and heard my proposal for keeping a number of prisoners for our march, and for carrying our baggage, turns to me before them all. "Captain Bob," says he, "I think you must be our leader, for all the success of this enterprise is owing to you." "No, no," said I, "do not compliment me; you shall be our Seignior Capitanio, you shall be general; I am too young for it." So, in short, we all agreed he should be our leader; but he would not accept of it alone, but would have me joined with him; and all the rest agreeing, I was obliged to comply.

The first piece of service they put me upon in this new command was as difficult as any they could think of, and that was to manage the prisoners; which, however, I cheerfully undertook, as you shall hear presently. But the immediate consultation was yet of more consequence; and that was, first, which way we should go; and secondly, how to furnish ourselves for the voyage with provisions.

There was among the prisoners one tall, well-shaped, handsome fellow, to whom the rest seemed to pay great respect, and who, as we understood afterwards, was the son of one of their kings; his father was, it seems, killed at our first volley, and he wounded with a shot in his arm, and with another just on one of his hips or haunches. The shot in his haunch being in a fleshy part, bled much, and he was half dead with the loss of blood. As to the shot in his arm, it had broke his wrist, and he was by both these wounds quite disabled, so that we were once going to turn him away, and let him die; and, if we had, he would have died indeed in a few days more: but, as I found the man had some respect showed him, it presently occurred to my thoughts

that we might bring him to be useful to us, and perhaps make him a kind of commander over them. So I caused our surgeon to take him in hand, and gave the poor wretch good words, that is to say, I spoke to him as well as I could by signs, to make him understand that we would make him well again.

When I brought him to the surgeon, he immediately dressed the wound in his haunch or buttock, and found the bullet had only grazed upon the flesh, and passed, as it were, by it, but it was not lodged in the part, so that it was soon healed and well again; but, as to his arm, he found one of the bones broken, which are in the fore-part from the wrist to the elbow; and this he set, and splintered it up, and bound his arm in a sling, hanging it about his neck, and making signs to him that he should not stir it; which he was so strict an observer of, that he set him down, and never moved one way or other but as the surgeon gave him leave.

I then carried him to our bark, and helped him over the side, because of his lameness. We made signs to him that his men must carry our goods for us, and showed him what we had; he answered, "Si, Seignior," or, "Yes, sir" (for we had taught him that word and the meaning of it), and taking up a bundle, he made signs to us, that when his arm was well he would carry some for us.

I made signs again to tell him, that if he would make his men carry them, we would not let him carry anything. We had secured all the prisoners in a narrow place, where we had bound them with mat cords, and set up stakes like a palisado round them; so, when we carried the prince on shore, we went with him to them, and made signs to him to ask them if they were willing to go with us to the country of lions. Accordingly he made a long speech to them, and we could understand by it that he told them, if they were willing, they must say, "Si, Seignior," telling them what it signified. They immediately answered, "Si, Seignior," and clapped their hands, looking up to the sun, which, the prince signified to us, was swearing to be faithful. But as soon as they had said so, one of them made a long speech to the prince; and in it we perceived, by his gestures, which were very antic, that they desired something from us, and that they were in great concern about it. So I asked him,

as well as I could, what it was they desired of us; he told us by signs that they desired we should clap our hands to the sun (that was, to swear) that we would not kill them, that we would give them *chiaruck*, that is to say, bread, would not starve them, and would not let the lions eat them. I told him we would promise all that; then he pointed to the sun, and clapped his hands, signing to me that I should do so too, which I did; at which all the prisoners fell flat on the ground, and rising up again, made the oddest, wildest cries that ever I heard.

I think it was the first time in my life that ever any religious thought affected me; but I could not refrain some reflections, and almost tears, in considering how happy it was that I was not born among such creatures as these, and was not so stupidly ignorant and barbarous; but this soon went off again, and I was not troubled again with any qualms of that sort for a long time after.

When this ceremony was over, our concern was to get some provisions, as well for the present subsistence of our prisoners as ourselves; and making signs to our prince that we were thinking upon that subject, he made signs to me that, if I would let one of the prisoners go to his town, he should bring provisions, and should bring some beasts to carry our baggage.

We now prepared for our march, when the prince coming to me, and pointing towards the several quarters of the world, made signs to know which way we intended to go; and when I showed him, pointing to the west, he presently let me know there was a great river a little further to the north, which was able to carry our bark many leagues into the country due west, I presently took the hint, and inquired for the mouth of the river, which I understood by him was above a day's march, and, by our estimation, we found it about seven leagues further. I take this to be the great river marked by our chart-makers at the northmost part of the coast of Mozambique, and called there Quilloa.

Consulting thus with ourselves, we resolved to take the prince, and as many of the prisoners as we could stow in our frigate, and go about by the bay into the river; and that eight of us, with our arms, should march by land to meet them on the river side; for the prince, carrying us to a rising ground, had showed us the

river very plain, a great way up the country, and in one place it was not above six miles to it.

It was my lot to march by land, and be captain of the whole caravan. I had eight of our men with me, and seven-and-thirty of our prisoners, without any baggage, for all our luggage was yet aboard. We drove the young bulls with us; nothing was ever so tame, so willing to work, or carry anything. The negroes would ride upon them four at a time, and they would go very willingly. They would eat out of our hand, lick our feet, and were as tractable as a dog.

We drove with us six or seven cows for food; but our negroes knew nothing of curing the flesh by salting and drying it till we showed them the way, and then they were mighty willing to do so as long as we had any salt to do it with, and to carry salt a great way too, after we found we should have no more.

It was an easy march to the river side for us that went by land, and we came thither in a piece of a day, being, as above, no more than six English miles; whereas it was no less than five days before they came to us by water, the wind in the bay having failed them, and the way, by reason of a great turn or reach in the river, being about fifty miles about.

Our prince, to assure us of the fidelity of the men in this march, had ordered them to be tied two and two by the wrist, as we handcuff prisoners in England; and made them so sensible of the reasonableness of it, that he made them do it themselves, appointing four of them to bind the rest; but we found them so honest, and particularly so obedient to him, that after we were gotten a little further off of their own country, we set them at liberty, though, when he came to us, he would have them tied again, and they continued so a good while.

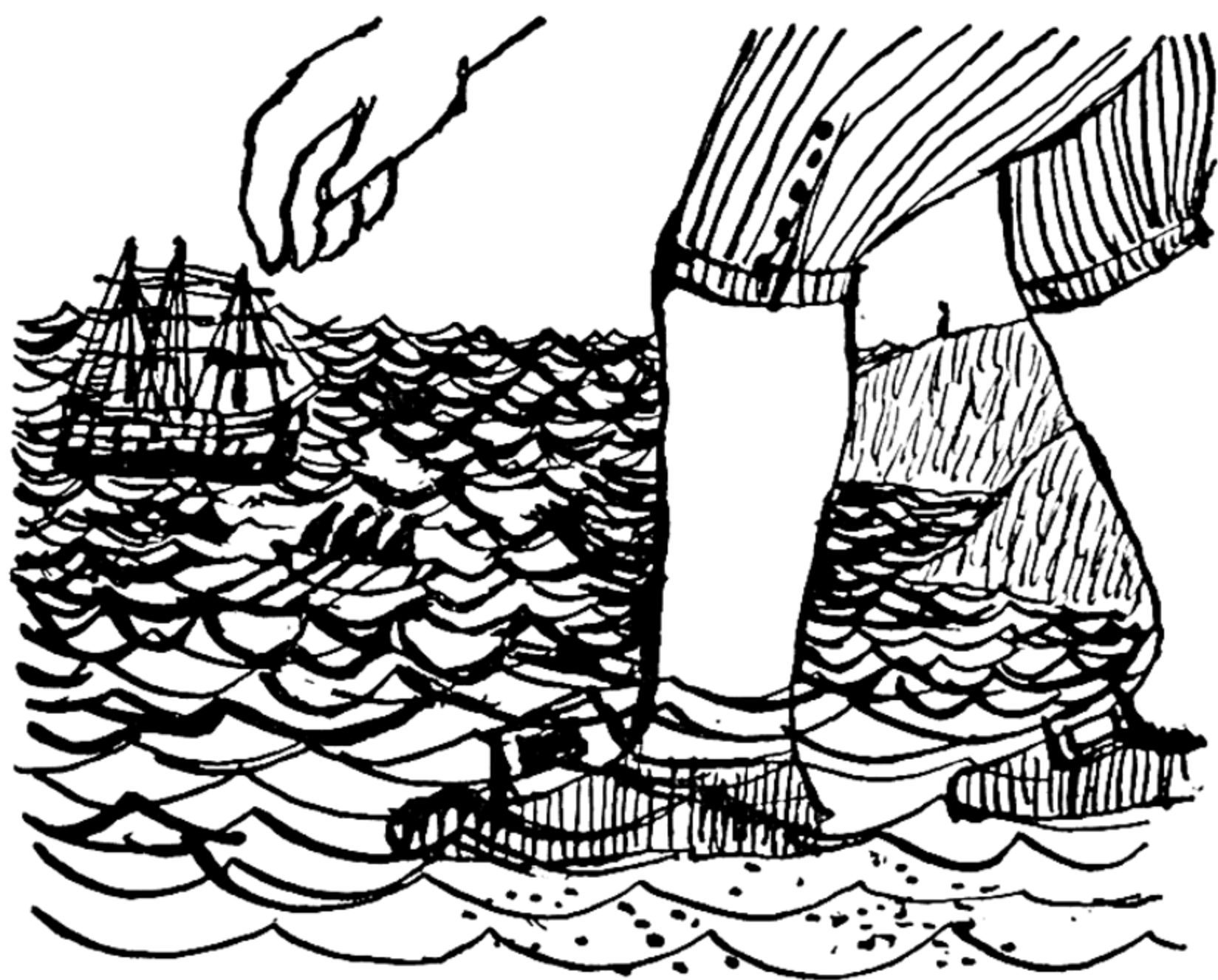
All the country on the bank of the river was a high land, no marshy swampy ground in it; the verdure good, and abundance of cattle feeding upon it wherever we went, or which way soever we looked; there was not much wood indeed, at least not near us; but further up we saw oak, cedar, and pine-trees, some of which were very large.

The river was a fair open channel, about as broad as the Thames below Gravesend, and a strong tide of flood, which we found held us about sixty miles; the channel deep, nor did we

find any want of water for a great way. In short, we went merrily up the river with the flood and the wind blowing still fresh at E. and E.N.E. We stemmed the ebb easily also, especially while the river continued broad and deep; but when we came past the swelling of the tide, and had the natural current of the river to go against, we found it too strong for us, and began to think of quitting our bark; but the prince would by no means agree to that, for, finding we had on board pretty good store of roping made of mats and flags, he ordered all the prisoners which were on shore to come and take hold of those ropes, and tow us along by the shore side; and as we hoisted our sail too, to ease them, the men ran along with us at a very great rate.

In this manner the river carried us up, by our computation, near 200 miles, and then it narrowed apace, and was not above as broad as the Thames is at Windsor, or thereabouts; and, after another day, we came to a great waterfall or cataract, enough to fright us, for I believe the whole body of water fell at once perpendicularly down a precipice above sixty foot high, which made noise enough to deprive men of their hearing, and we heard it above ten miles before we came to it.

Here we were at a full stop.



In the Land of Giants

JONATHAN SWIFT

ON his second fabulous voyage Lemuel Gulliver was shipwrecked on a strange shore where grass grew twenty feet tall. He very soon discovered that he had become marooned in a land of giants, where rats were as large as mastiffs and a woman's handkerchief was larger and coarser in texture than the mainsail of a warship of the eighteenth century, the period when Gulliver embarked on his voyages to strange lands. The land of the giants was called Brobdingnag, and what further adventures befell the shipwrecked mariner there are related in *Gulliver's Travels*, from which this story is taken.

Having been condemned by nature and fortune to an active and restless life; in ten months after my return, I again left my native country, and took shipping in the Downs on the 20th day

of June, 1702, in the *Adventure*, Capt. John Nicholas, a Cornishman, commander, bound for Surat. We had a very prosperous gale until we arrived at the Cape of Good Hope, where we landed for fresh water; but discovering a leak we unshipped our goods, and wintered there; for the captain falling sick of an ague, we could not leave the cape until the end of March. We then set sail, and had a good voyage until we passed the Straits of Madagascar; but having got northward of that island, and to about five degrees south latitude, the winds, which in those seas are observed to blow a constant equal gale between the north and west, from the beginning of December to the beginning of May, on the 19th of April began to blow with much greater violence, and more westerly than usual; continuing so for twenty days together, during which time we were driven a little to the east of the Molucca Islands, and about three degrees northward of the line, as our captain found by an observation he took the 2nd of May, at which time the wind ceased, and it was a perfect calm, whereat I was not a little rejoiced. But he being a man well experienced in the navigation of those seas, bid us all prepare against a storm, which accordingly happened the day following: for a southern wind, called the southern monsoon, began to set in.

Finding it was like to overblow, we took in our sprit-sail, and stood by to hand the fore-sail; but making foul weather, we looked the guns were all fast, and handed the mizzen. The ship lay very broad off, so we thought it better spooning before the sea, than trying or hulling. We reefed the fore-sail and set him, we hauled aft the fore-sheet; the helm was hard a-weather. The ship wore bravely. We belayed the fore down-hall; but the sail was split, and we hauled down the yard, and got the sail into the ship, and unbound all the things clear of it. It was a very fierce storm; the sea broke strange and dangerous. We hauled off upon the lanniard of the wipstaff, and helped the man at helm. We would not get down our top-mast, but let all stand, because she scudded before the sea very well, and we knew that the top-mast being aloft, the ship was the wholesomer, and made better way through the sea, seeing we had sea-room. When the storm was over, we set fore-sail and main-sail, and brought the ship to. Then we set the mizzen, maintop-sail and the foretop-sail. Our

course was east-north-east, the wind was at south-west. We got the starboard tack aboard, we cast off our weather-braces and lifts; we set in the lee-braces, and hauled forward by the weather-bowlings, and hauled them tight, and belayed them, and hauled over the mizzen tack to windward, and kept her full and by as near as she would lie.

During this storm, which was followed by a strong wind west-south-west, we were carried by my computation about five hundred leagues to the east, so that the oldest sailor on board could not tell in what part of the world we were. Our provisions held out well, our ship was staunch, and our crew all in good health; but we lay in the utmost distress for water. We thought it best to hold on the same course rather than turn more northerly, which might have brought us to the north-west parts of great Tartary, and into the frozen sea.

On the 16th day of June, 1703, a boy on the top-mast discovered land. On the 17th we came in full view of a great island or continent, (for we knew not whether) on the south side whereof was a small neck of land jutting out into the sea, and a creek too shallow to hold a ship of above one hundred tons. We cast anchor within a league of this creek, and our captain sent a dozen of his men well armed in the long boat, with vessels for water, if any could be found. I desired his leave to go with them, that I might see the country, and make what discoveries I could. When we came to land we saw no river or spring, nor any sign of inhabitants. Our men therefore wandered on the shore to find out some fresh water near the sea, and I walked alone about a mile on the other side, where I observed the country all barren and rocky. I now began to be weary, and seeing nothing to entertain my curiosity, I returned gently down towards the creek; and the sea being full in my view, I saw our men already got into the boat, and rowing for life to the ship. I was going to halloo after them, although it had been to little purpose, when I observed a huge creature walking after them in the sea, as fast as he could: he waded not much deeper than his knees, and took prodigious strides: but our men had the start of him half a league, and the sea thereabouts being full of sharp pointed rocks, the monster was not able to overtake the boat. This I was afterwards told, for I durst not stay to see the issue of that adventure;

but run as fast as I could the way I first went; and then climbed up a steep hill, which gave me some prospect of the country. I found it fully cultivated; but that which first surprised me was the length of the grass, which in those grounds that seemed to be kept for hay, was above twenty foot high.

I fell into a high road, for so I took it to be, although it served to the inhabitants only as a footpath through a field of barley. Here I walked on for some time, but could see little on either side, it being now near harvest, and the corn rising at least forty foot. I was an hour walking to the end of this field; which was fenced in with a hedge of at least one hundred and twenty foot high, and the trees so lofty that I could make no computation of their altitude. There was a stile to pass from this field into the next: it had four steps, and a stone to cross over when you came to the utmost. It was impossible for me to climb this stile, because every step was six foot high, and the upper stone above twenty. I was endeavouring to find some gap in the hedge, when I discovered one of the inhabitants in the next field advancing towards the stile, of the same size with him whom I saw in the sea pursuing our boat. He appeared as tall as an ordinary spire-steeple; and took about ten yards at every stride, as near as I could guess. I was struck with the utmost fear and astonishment, and ran to hide myself in the corn, from whence I saw him at the top of the stile, looking back into the next field on the right hand; and heard him call in a voice many degrees louder than a speaking trumpet; but the noise was so high in the air, that at first I certainly thought it was thunder. Whereupon seven monsters like himself came towards him with reaping-hooks in their hands, each hook about the largeness of six scythes. These people were not so well clad as the first, whose servants or labourers they seemed to be. For, upon some words he spoke, they went to reap the corn in the field where I lay. I kept from them at as great a distance as I could, but was forced to move with extreme difficulty; for the stalks of the corn were sometimes not above a foot distant, so that I could hardly squeeze my body betwixt them. However, I made a shift to go forward until I came to a part of the field where the corn had been laid by the rain and wind: here it was

impossible for me to advance a step; for the stalks were so interwoven that I could not creep through, and the beards of the fallen ears so strong and pointed, that they pierced through my clothes into my flesh. At the same time I heard the reapers not above a hundred yards behind me. Being quite dispirited with toil, and wholly overcome by grief and despair, I lay down between two ridges, and heartily wished I might there end my days. I bemoaned my desolate widow, and fatherless children: I lamented my own folly and wilfulness in attempting a second voyage against the advice of all my friends and relations. In this terrible agitation of mind I could not forbear thinking of Lilliput, whose inhabitants looked upon me as the greatest prodigy that ever appeared in the world; where I was able to draw an imperial fleet in my hand, and perform those other actions which will be recorded for ever in the chronicles of that empire, while posterity shall hardly believe them, although attested by millions. I reflected what a mortification it must prove to me to appear as inconsiderable in this nation, as one single Lilliputian would be among us. But, this I conceived was to be the least of my misfortunes: for, as human creatures are observed to be more savage and cruel in proportion to their bulk; what could I expect but to be a morsel in the mouth of the first among these enormous barbarians, who should happen to seize me? Undoubtedly philosophers are in the right when they tell us, that nothing is great or little, otherwise than by comparison: it might have pleased fortune to let the Lilliputians find some nation, where the people were as diminutive with respect to them as they were to me. And who knows but that even this prodigious race of mortals might be equally overmatched in some distant part of the world, whereof we have yet no discovery?

Scared and confounded as I was, I could not forbear going on with these reflections; when one of the reapers approaching within ten yards of the ridge where I lay, made me apprehend, that with the next step I should be squashed to death under his foot, or cut in two with his reaping-hook. And therefore when he was again about to move, I screamed as loud as fear could make me. Whereupon the huge creature trod short, and looking round about under him for some time, at last espied me as I lay

on the ground. He considered a while with the caution of one who endeavours to lay hold on a small dangerous animal in such a manner that it shall not be able either to scratch or to bite him; as I myself have sometimes done with a weasel in England. At length he ventured to take me up behind by the middle between his forefinger and thumb, and brought me within three yards of his eyes, that he might behold my shape more perfectly. I guessed his meaning; and my good fortune gave me so much presence of mind, that I resolved not to struggle in the least, as he held me in the air above sixty foot from the ground; although he grievously pinched my sides, for fear I should slip through his fingers. All I ventured was to raise mine eyes towards the sun, and place my hands together in a supplicating posture, and to speak some words in an humble melancholy tone, suitable to the condition I then was in. For, I apprehended every moment that he would dash me against the ground, as we usually do any little hateful animal which we have a mind to destroy. But my good star would have it, that he appeared pleased with my voice and gestures, and began to look upon me as a curiosity; much wondering to hear me pronounce articulate words, although he could not understand them. In the meantime, I was not able to forbear groaning and shedding tears, and turning my head towards my sides; letting him know, as well as I could, how cruelly I was hurt by the pressure of his thumb and finger. He seemed to apprehend my meaning; for, lifting up the lappet of his coat, he put me gently into it, and immediately ran along with me to his master, who was a substantial farmer, and the same person I had first seen in the field.

The farmer having (as I supposed by their talk) received such an account of me as his servant could give him, took a piece of a small straw, about the size of a walking staff, and therewith lifted up the lappets of my coat; which it seems he thought to be some kind of covering that nature had given me. He blew my hairs aside to take a better view of my face. He called his hinds about him, and asked them (as I afterwards learned) whether they had ever seen in the fields any little creature that resembled me. He then placed me softly on the ground upon all four; but I got immediately up, and walked

slowly backwards and forwards, to let those people see I had no intent to run away. They all sat down in a circle about me, the better to observe my motions. I pulled off my hat, and made a low bow towards the farmer: I fell on my knees, and lifted up my hands and eyes, and spoke several words as loud as I could: I took a purse of gold out of my pocket, and humbly presented it to him. He received it on the palm of his hand, then applied it close to his eye, to see what it was, and afterwards turned it several times with the point of a pin (which he took out of his sleeve), but could make nothing of it. Whereupon I made a sign that he should place his hand on the ground: I then took the purse, and opening it, poured all the gold into his palm. There were six Spanish-pieces of four pistoles each, besides twenty or thirty smaller coins. I saw him wet the tip of his little finger upon his tongue, and take up one of my largest pieces, and then another; but he seemed to be wholly ignorant what they were. He made me a sign to put them again into my purse, and the purse again into my pocket; which after offering to him several times, I thought it best to do.

The farmer by this time was convinced I must be a rational creature. He spoke often to me; but the sound of his voice pierced my ears like that of a water-mill; yet his words were articulate enough. I answered as loud as I could in several languages; and he often laid his ear within two yards of me, but all in vain, for we were wholly unintelligible to each other. He then sent his servants to their work, and taking his handkerchief out of his pocket, he doubled and spread it on his hand, which he placed flat on the ground with the palm upwards, making me a sign to step into it, as I could easily do, for it was not above a foot in thickness. I thought it my part to obey; and for fear of falling, laid myself at full length upon the handkerchief, with the remainder of which he lapped me up to the head for further security; and in this manner carried me home to his house. There he called his wife, and showed me to her; but she screamed and ran back as women in England do at the sight of a toad or a spider. However, when she had a while seen my behaviour, and how well I observed the signs her husband made, she was soon reconciled, and by degrees grew extremely tender of me.

It was about twelve at noon, and a servant brought in dinner. It was only one substantial dish of meat (fit for the plain condition of an husbandman) in a dish of about four and twenty foot diameter. The company were the farmer and wife, three children, and an old grandmother: when they were sat down, the farmer placed me at some distance from him on the table, which was thirty foot high from the floor. I was in a terrible fright, and kept as far as I could from the edge, for fear of falling. The wife minced a bit of meat, then crumbled some bread on a trencher, and placed it before me. I made her a low bow, took out my knife and fork, and fell to eat; which gave them exceeding delight. The mistress sent her maid for a small dram-cup, which held about two gallons; and filled it with drink: I took up the vessel with much difficulty in both hands, and in a most respectful manner drank to her ladyship's health, expressing the words as loud as I could in English; which made the company laugh so heartily, that I was almost deafened with the noise. This liquor tasted like a small cider, and was not unpleasant. Then the master made me a sign to come to his trencher side; but as I walked on the table, being in great surprise all the time, as the indulgent reader will easily conceive and excuse, I happened to stumble against a crust, and fell flat on my face, but received no hurt. I got up immediately, and observing the good people to be in much concern, I took my hat (which I held under my arm out of good manners) and waving it over my head, made three huzza's, to show I had got no mischief by the fall. But advancing forwards toward my master (as I shall henceforth call him) his youngest son who sat next him, an arch boy of about ten years old, took me up by the legs, and held me so high in the air, that I trembled every limb; but his father snatched me from him; and at the same time gave him such a box on the left ear, as would have felled an European troop of horse to the earth; ordering him to be taken from the table. But, being afraid the boy might owe me a spite; and well remembering how mischievous all children among us naturally are to sparrows, rabbits, young kittens, and puppy-dogs; I fell on my knees, and pointing to the boy, made my master understand, as well as I could, that I desired his son be pardoned. The father complied, and the lad took his seat again;

whereupon I went to him and kissed his hand, which my master took, and made him stroke me gently with it.

In the midst of dinner my mistress's favourite cat leapt into her lap. I heard a noise behind me like that of a dozen stocking-weavers at work; and turning my head, I found it proceeded from the purring of this animal, who seemed to be three times larger than an ox, as I computed by the view of her head, and one of her paws, while her mistress was feeding and stroking her. The fierceness of this creature's countenance altogether discomposed me; although I stood at the further end of the table, above fifty foot off; and although my mistress held her fast for fear she might give a spring, and seize me in her talons. But, it happened there was no danger; for the cat took not the least notice of me when my master placed me within three yards of her. And as I have been always told, and found true by experience in my travels, that flying, or discovering fear before a fierce animal, is a certain way to make it pursue or attack you; so I resolved, in this dangerous juncture to show no manner of concern. I walked with intrepidity five or six times before the very head of the cat, and came within half a yard of her; whereupon she drew herself back, as if she were more afraid of me: I had less apprehension concerning the dogs, whereof three or four came into the room, as it is usual in farmers' houses; one of which was a mastiff equal in bulk to four elephants, and a greyhound somewhat taller than the mastiff, but not so large.

When dinner was almost done, the nurse came in with a child of a year old in her arms; who immediately spied me, and began a squall that you might have heard from London Bridge to Chelsea; after the usual oratory of infants, to get me for a plaything. The mother out of pure indulgence took me up, and put me towards the child, who presently seized me by the middle, and got my head in his mouth, where I roared so loud that the urchin was frightened, and let me drop; and I should have infallibly broke my neck, if the mother had not held her apron under me. The nurse, to quiet her babe, made use of a rattle, which was a kind of hollow vessel filled with great stones, and fastened by a cable to the child's waist.

I remember when I was at Lilliput, the complexions of those

diminutive people appeared to me the fairest in the world: and talking upon this subject with a person of learning there, who was an intimate friend of mine; he said, that my face appeared much fairer and smoother when he looked on me from the ground, than it did upon a nearer view when I took him up in my hand, and brought him close; which he confessed was at first a very shocking sight. He said, he could discover great holes in my skin; that the stumps of my beard were ten times stronger than the bristles of a boar; and my complexion made up of several colours altogether disagreeable: although I must beg leave to say for myself, that I am as fair as most of my sex and country, and very little sunburnt by all my travels. On the other sides, discoursing of the ladies in that emperor's court, he used to tell me, one had freckles, another too wide a mouth, a third too large a nose; nothing of which I was able to distinguish. I confess, this reflection was obvious enough; which, however, I could not forbear, lest the reader might think those vast creatures were actually deformed: for I must do them justice to say, they are a comely race of people; and particularly the features of my master's countenance, although he were but a farmer, when I beheld him from the height of sixty foot, appeared very well proportioned.

When dinner was done, my master went out to his labourers; and, as I could discover by his voice and gesture, gave his wife a strict charge to take care of me. I was very much tired and disposed to sleep, which my mistress perceiving, she put me on her own bed, and covered me with a clean white handkerchief, but larger and coarser than the mainsail of a man-of-war.

I slept about two hours, and dreamed I was at home with my wife and children, which aggravated my sorrows when I awaked and found myself alone in a vast room, between two and three hundred foot wide, and above two hundred high; lying in a bed twenty yards wide. My mistress was gone about her household affairs, and had locked me in. The bed was eight yards from the floor. Some natural necessities required me to get down: I durst not presume to call, and if I had, it would have been in vain, with such a voice as mine, at so great a distance from the room where I lay, to the kitchen where the family kept. While I was under these circumstances, two rats

crept up the curtains, and ran smelling backwards and forwards on the bed: one of them came up almost to my face; whereupon I rose in a fright, and drew out my hanger to defend myself. These horrible animals had the boldness to attack me on both sides, and one of them held his forefeet at my collar; but I had the good fortune to rip up his belly before he could do me any mischief. He fell down at my feet; and the other seeing the fate of his comrade, made his escape, but not without one good wound on the back, which I gave him as he fled, and made the blood run trickling from him. After this exploit, I walked gently to and fro on the bed, to recover my breath and loss of spirits. These creatures were of the size of a large mastiff, but infinitely more nimble and fierce; so that, if I had taken off my belt before I went to sleep, I must have infallibly been torn to pieces and devoured. I measured the tail of the dead rat, and found it to be two yards long, wanting an inch; but it went against my stomach to drag the carcass off the bed, where it lay still bleeding; I observed it had yet some life, but with a strong slash cross the neck, I thoroughly dispatched it.

Soon after, my mistress came into the room, who seeing me all bloody, ran and took me up in her hand. I pointed to the dead rat, smiling and making other signs to show I was not hurt; whereat she was extremely rejoiced, calling the maid to take up the dead rat with a pair of tongs, and throw it out of the window. Then she set me on a table, where I showed her my hanger all bloody, and wiping it on the lappet of my coat, returned it to the scabbard. I was pressed to do more than one thing, which another could not do for me; and therefore endeavoured to make my mistress understand, that I desired to be set down on the floor; which after she had done, my bashfulness would not suffer me to express myself farther than by pointing to the door, and bowing several times. The good woman with much difficulty at last perceived what I would be at; and taking me up again in her hand, walked into the garden, where she set me down. I went on one side about two hundred yards; and beckoning to her not to look or to follow me, I hid myself between two leaves of sorrel, and there discharged the necessities of nature.

I hope, the gentle reader will excuse me for dwelling on these,

and the like particulars; which however insignificant they may appear to grovelling vulgar minds, yet will certainly help a philosopher to enlarge his thoughts and imagination, and apply them to the benefit of public as well as private life; which was my sole design in presenting this, and other accounts of my travels to the world; wherein, I have been chiefly studious of truth, without affecting any ornaments of learning, or of style. But, the whole scene of this voyage made so strong an impression on my mind, and is so deeply fixed in my memory, that in committing it to paper, I did not omit one material circumstance: however, upon a strict review, I blotted out several passages of less moment which were in my first copy, for fear of being censured as tedious and trifling, whereof travellers are often, perhaps not without justice, accused.



Snatched from the Sea

R. M. BALLANTYNE

WHEN the schooner *Nancy* sailed down the Thames and into the North Sea, she carried, besides her crew under Captain Bluenose, a seaman friend named Bax, a missionary and his daughter, and young Guy Foster. The schooner ran into a gale and became another victim of the treacherous and notorious Goodwin Sands, the graveyard of ships since the time of Caesar, who first landed in Britain when he stepped ashore at Deal, possibly at the same spot from which the sailors took off to render aid to the shipwrecked crew and passengers of the doomed schooner after the warning lights were seen on the Gull lightship. This story is one of the dramatic narratives in the author's book *The Lifeboat*.

What seamen style "a whole gale" seemed to be brewing when the *Nancy* tripped her anchor and shook out her sails.

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Sailors have a quiet, matter-of-fact, and professional way of talking about the weather. A stiff breeze carried the *Nancy* down the Thames towards the open sea; then a sudden calm left her to float without progressive motion on the water. As evening approached the breeze sprang up again and freshened. Then it chopped round to the east, and when night fell it began to blow hard right in the teeth of the little vessel.

Bax was a good and a bold seaman. He knew the coast well, and hoped, in due course, to double the North Foreland, and find shelter in the Downs. He knew the channels and buoys thoroughly, and had often run the same course in stormy weather. But the gale which now began to buffet the little schooner was of more than ordinary violence. It was one of those fierce hurricanes which, once in a year, or, it maybe, once in every three or four years, bursts upon our island, strews the coast with wrecks, and fills many homes and hearts with desolation.

Little fear would her gallant commander have felt had the ship been tight, and trim, and sound; but he knew that her rigging was old, and one of her masts unsound, and he felt that the best seamanship could be of no avail whatever against her numerous defects. His experienced eye told him that a storm of no ordinary severity was coming, and he trembled for the life of the young girl who had been so unexpectedly placed under his care.

Had the dangers attendant upon an unseaworthy vessel, and the difficulty of navigating the channels of these celebrated Sands been all that Bax had to fear, he would have felt comparatively at ease; but the economical spirit of Denham, Crumps, and Co. had supplied him with anchors and chains which he feared were neither new enough nor sufficiently powerful to hold his vessel after she had gained her anchorage-ground. In these circumstances, he resolved to run for the shelter of Ramsgate Harbour.

Before he could carry out his intentions the wind chopped round to the north, and for some time blew so hard as to threaten the capsizing of the schooner. The cross sea also rendered her almost unmanageable, so that, ere long, she was driven to

leeward of the outer lightship that marks the north end of the Goodwins.

Again the wind shifted a few points to the eastward, and soon the *Nancy* was flying like a racehorse towards the shore.

"Is your daughter dressed?" inquired Bax of Mr. Burton, as a fiercer gust than usual nearly laid the schooner on her beam-ends, and deluged the decks with water.

"No, she sleeps soundly, and I am loath to disturb her. Do you think we are in much danger?"

"In none, if the schooner were seaworthy, but in much, seeing that she has not got a sound plank or spar. Go down, sir, and get her dressed at once; and, harkee, let her put on every wrap she happens to have with her."

The missionary needed no second bidding. He went below to rouse and assist Lucy, while Bluenose, Guy, and the rest of those on board held on to ropes and belaying pins, and awaited the result in silence. The noise of the wind, and the peals of thunder that seemed to tear the heavens asunder, rendered conversation impossible. They all felt that a few minutes would decide whether this terrible rush landward would terminate in safety or disaster, and they knew that everything, as far as human skill had to do with it, depended on Bax.

With a look of calm, sober gravity the young seaman stood grasping the weather-shrouds of the mainmast, and looking intently towards the lightship called the Gull Light, which is anchored off the North Sand Head.

Suddenly a violent gust snapped the topsail-yard, and the sail was instantly blown to ribbons. The dashing of this spar about carried away the fore-topmast, and almost as a necessary consequence, the jib with the jib-boom went along with it.

The schooner instantly became unmanageable, and was driven bodily to leeward.

Seizing an axe, Bax, with the prompt assistance of the crew and his friends, soon cleared away the wreck, and once more got the head of his vessel round towards the Gull Light, the lanterns of which could be seen faintly gleaming through the murky atmosphere. But it was too late. The breakers of the North Sand Head were already roaring under their lee, and also right ahead of them.

"Port! port! hard-a-port!" shouted Bax.

"Port it is," replied the steersman with that calm professional sing-song tone peculiar to seamen.

At that instant, the schooner struck the sand, passed over the first line of breakers, and rushed onwards to certain destruction.

"Bring Lucy on deck," cried Bax.

Mr. Burton ran below to obey, but the words had scarce been spoken when Guy Foster entered the cabin, and seizing the trembling girl in his arms, bore her gently but swiftly to the deck.

Here the scene that met her gaze was truly awful. It seemed as if above and below there were but one wild chaos of waters over which brooded a sky of ebony. The schooner had by this time got into the hideous turmoil of shallow water, the lurid whiteness of which gleamed in the dark like unearthly light. As yet the vessel was rushing fiercely through it; the rudder had been carried away by the first shock, and she could not be steered. Just as Lucy was placed by Bax in a position of comparative shelter under the lee of the quarter-rails, the *Nancy* struck a second time with fearful violence; she remained hard and fast on the sands, and the shock sent her foremast overboard.

She heeled very much over to leeward, but the form of the bank on which she lay fortunately prevented her being thrown altogether on her beam-ends. Had this happened, the cross-trees would have been buried in water, and all must have perished.

Bluenose shouted: "Couldn't ye send up a rocket?"

"Han't got any," replied Bax.

There had been a signal-gun aboard, but at the first shock it tore its fastenings out of the old planks, and went crashing through the lee bulwarks into the sea.

"Couldn't we get up a glim nohow?" pursued Bluenose.

"Aye, couldn't that be done?" cried Guy, who clambered towards them in order to take part in the consultation, for the shrieking of the storm rendered every voice inaudible at the distance of anything short of an inch or two from the ear.

"The matches were in the cabin, and that's flooded now," said Bax.

Guy replied by taking a tin box from his pocket, in which were a few matches.

“Ha! that’ll do,” cried Bax eagerly; “there’s a can of turpentine just under the fore-hatch, which can’t have been damaged by water.”

Bax cut off some of the drier portions of his clothing. These, with a piece of untwisted rope, were soaked in turpentine, and converted hastily into a rude torch; but it was long before a light could be got in such a storm. The matches were nearly exhausted before this was accomplished. At last the saturated mass caught fire, and instantly a rich flame of light flashed over the wild scene, and clearly revealed to them the appalling circumstances in which they were placed. Poor Lucy shuddered, and covering her eyes, cast herself down in prayer. Bax raised the burning mass high over his head, and waved it in the black air. He even clambered to the top of the broken mast, in order to let it be seen far and wide over the watery waste. The inflammable turpentine refused to be quenched by the raging storm, and in a few seconds they had the comfort of seeing the bright flame of a rocket shoot up into the sky. At the same moment a flash in the distance showed that their signal had been observed by the lightship.

The sound of the gun was not heard by those on the wreck, but both it and the rocket were observed from the shore, where many a hardy seaman and pilot, knowing full well the dangers of such a night, kept watch and ward in order to render prompt assistance to their fellow-men in distress.

To those who clung to the maintop of the *Nancy* these signals were a bright gleam of hope, with the exception of Lucy, whose spirit sank when she endeavoured in vain to penetrate the thick darkness that followed.

Guy held on to the weather-shrouds close to Bax. Speaking so as not to be heard by the others, he said:

“Is there much chance of a boat putting off to us?”

“Not much,” replied Bax. “A lugger could scarcely live in such a sea. Certainly it could not come near us in this shoal water. I doubt even if the lifeboat could come here.”

For two hours after this they remained silently in their exposed position, their limbs stiffening with cold, drenched continually with spray, and occasionally overwhelmed by the crest of a monstrous wave. Sometimes a rocket from the lightship shot

athwart the dark sky, and at all times her lights gleamed like faint stars far away to windward. When the sea broke around them in whiter sheets than usual, they could see the head of the broken foremast drawn against it like a black line to leeward. Everything else, above and below, was thick darkness.

One of the seamen, who had been for some time in bad health, was the first to give way. Without uttering a word, he loosened his hold of the shrouds and fell backwards. Guy saw him falling, and, making a desperate grasp at him, caught him by the breast of his shirt, but the garment gave way, and next moment he was down in the boiling flood. Guy, with an impulse that was natural to him, was about to leap off to his rescue, but Bluenose caught him by the collar and held him forcibly back. In another moment the man was gone for ever.

So silently did all this pass, and so furious was the tumult of the storm, that Lucy and her father were not aware of what had occurred.

Tommy Bogey was the next who failed. Turning with instinctive trust to his friend in this extremity, he shouted: "Bax, give us a hand!"

Before his friend could do so, his grasp relaxed and he fell back with a piercing shriek that rose above even the howling wind.

Almost an instant after he struck the water, Bax dived head foremost into it, and came up with him in his arms. Both man and boy went to leeward instantly. The former had counted on this. The fate of the seaman who had just perished had led him to reflect that a vigorous effort might have enabled him to gain the stump of the foremast, which still stood, as we have said, to leeward of the mainmast. Acting on this thought, he had plunged without hesitation when the moment for action came, although it did come unexpectedly.

A faint shout soon told his horror-stricken companions that he had gained the point of safety.

Guy had hauled in the slack of one of the numerous ropes attached to the mainmast that were floating away to leeward, and was fastening the end of it round his waist. Bluenose and the missionary turned quickly on hearing the seaman's shout, but they were too late to prevent the bold youth from carrying out his design, even if they had wished to do so.

Taking a vigorous spring to windward, Guy was in the sea in a moment. In another instant he was lost to view in darkness. Bluenose seized the end of the rope, and awaited the result in breathless suspense. Presently a shout, so faint that it seemed miles away, was heard to leeward, and the rope was jerked violently.

"Now, lads, all hands ahoy!" cried Bluenose in wild excitement; "just give 'em time to haul in the slack, and tie it round 'em, and then pull with a will."

The incident and the energy of the Captain seemed to act like a spell on the men, who had up to this time clung to the shrouds in a state of half-stupor. They clustered round Bluenose, and each gaining the best footing possible in the circumstances, seized hold of the rope.

Again the rope was shaken violently, and a heavy strain was felt on it. The men pulled it in with difficulty, hand over hand, and in a short time, Bax, Guy, and Tommy were once more safe in their former position on the cross-trees.

Gradually Bax ceased to raise his encouraging voice—indeed the whistling wind would have rendered it inaudible—and the party on the cross-trees clung to their frail spar almost in despair. As the gale increased so did the danger of their position. No chance of deliverance seemed left to them; no prospect of escape from their dreadful fate; the only ray of hope that came to them fitfully through the driving storm, was the faint gleaming of the lightship that guards the Goodwin Sands.

On the night of the storm the boom of a gun fired by the Gull lightship broke on the ears of the men of Deal, and a moment later the bright flash of a rocket was seen. It was the well-known signal that there was a ship in distress on the sands.

Instantly the hardy boatmen were at work. One of their largest boats was launched through the wild surf, as if by magic, and its stout crew were straining at the oars as if their lives depended on the result.

It was a long weary pull to the Gull lightship. When they reached it they hailed those on board, and asked where away the wreck was.

"Right down to leeward, on the Sand Head," was the reply.

Away went the lugger before the gale with just a corner of the foresail hoisted. It was not long before they came in sight of the breakers on the Sands. Here they were obliged to put out the oars and exercise the utmost caution, lest they should incur the fate from which they had come out to rescue others.

The anchor was let go, and the lugger was veered down by its cable as far in the direction of the wreck as possible, but the boat was so large and drew so much water that they could not even get within sight of the wreck. In these circumstances the men nestled as they best might under the lee of the boat's sides, and prepared to ride out the storm, or at least to remain at anchor there until daylight should enable them to act with more precision and safety.

Fortunately for all parties concerned, other eyes and ears had been on the watch that night. At Broadstairs, which lies a little to the north of Deal, the crew of the lifeboat had been on the look-out, and no sooner did they see the rocket and hear the gun, than they launched their boat and put off to the rescue.

Seldom had the Broadstairs boat faced so wild a storm as that which blew on this occasion. The seas broke over her in cataracts. Again and again she was more than half-filled with water, but this was speedily got rid of, and in the course of an hour she was beside the lugger.

"Where away?" shouted the coxswain of the lifeboat as they passed.

"Right ahead, not two cables' lengths," was the reply.

The sails of the lifeboat had already been lowered, and the oars were out in a second. Gradually and slowly they dropped down towards the breakers, and soon caught sight of the mast of the *Nancy*, still towering up in the midst of the angry waters.

The danger to the lifeboat was now very great, for there was such a wild chopping sea on the sands that it ran great risk of being upset. The boat was one of the old-fashioned stamp, which, although incapable of being sunk, was not secure against being overturned, and it did not possess that power of righting itself which characterizes the lifeboats of the present day.

In a few minutes they were near enough to see the mast of the *Nancy* dimly in the dark. The coxswain immediately gave the order to let go the anchor and veer down towards the wreck.

The crew and passengers of the *Nancy* were still clinging to the cross-trees, benumbed and almost unable to speak or move when the lifeboat approached. With the exception of Bax and Bluenose, they were all thoroughly exhausted. All their energies were required to enable them simply to retain their position on the rigging. At first the sight of the rockets from the lightship, and her lanterns gleaming in the far distance, had aroused feelings of hope, but as hour after hour passed away most of the unhappy people fell into a sort of stupor or indifference, and the lights were no longer regarded with hopeful looks.

When the lugger came towards them and anchored outside the Sands, it was so dark that none but sharp eyes could make her out through the blinding spray. Bax and Bluenose descried her, but both of them were so well aware of the impossibility of a large boat venturing among the shoals and breakers that they tacitly resolved not to acquaint their comrades with its presence, lest they should raise false hopes, which, when disappointed, might plunge them into still deeper despair.

Very different, however, were the feelings with which they beheld the approach of the lifeboat, which the practised eye of Bax discerned long before she came alongside.

"The lifeboat!" said Bax sharply in the ear of Bluenose, who was close beside him. "Look! am I right?"

"So 'tis, I *do* b'lieve," cried the Captain, staring intently in the direction indicated by his friend's outstretched hand.

"Lifeboat ahoy!" shouted Bax, in a voice that rang loud and strong above the whistling winds, like the blast of a brazen trumpet.

"Wreck ahoy!" cried the coxswain of the boat.

"Cheer up, Lucy! Ho! comrades, look alive, here comes the lifeboat!"

Bax accompanied these words with active preparations for heaving a rope and otherwise facilitating their anticipated escape. Guy was the first to respond to the cry. Having placed himself in a very exposed position in order that his person might shelter Lucy Burton, he had been benumbed more thoroughly than his comrades, but his blood was young, and it only wanted the call to action to restore him to the full use of his powers and faculties. Not so with the missionary. He had become almost

insensible, and, but for the effort to protect his child which animated and sustained him, must certainly have fallen into the sea. Some of the men, too, were utterly helpless. Their stiffened hands, indeed, maintained a death-like grip of the ropes, but otherwise they were quite incapable of helping themselves.

As for Lucy, she had been so well cared for and protected from the bitter fury of the wind, that, although much exhausted, terrified, and shaken, she was neither so benumbed nor so helpless as some of her less fortunate companions.

Presently the lifeboat was close on the lee side of the mast, and a cheer burst from her crew when they saw the number of survivors on the cross-trees.

"Look out!" cried the man in the bow of the boat, as he swung a heavily-loaded stick round his head, and flung it over the mast. The light line attached to this was caught by Bax, and by means of it a stout rope was drawn from the boat to the mast of the *Nancy* and made fast.

And now came the most dangerous and difficult part of the service. Besides the danger of the mast being broken by the violence of the increasing storm and hurled upon the lifeboat, an event which would have ensured its destruction, there was the risk of the boat herself being stove against the mast by the lashing waves, which spun her on their white crests or engulfed her in their black hollows, as if she had been a cork. The greatest care was therefore requisite in approaching the wreck, and when this was accomplished there still remained the difficulty of getting the exhausted crew into the boat.

Had they all been young and strong like Bax or Guy, they could have slid down the rope at the risk of nothing worse than a few bruises; but with several of them this method of escape was impossible—with Lucy and her father it was, in any circumstances, out of the question. A block and tackle were therefore quickly rigged up by Bluenose, by which they were lowered.

Poor Lucy had not courage to make the attempt until one or two of the seamen had preceded her; it seemed so appalling to be swung off the mast into the black raging chaos beneath her feet, where the lifeboat, shrouded partially in darkness and covered with driving spray, appeared to her more like a phantom than a reality.

"Come, Miss Lucy," said Bax, "I'll fasten the rope round myself and be swung down with you in my arms."

Lucy would not hear of this. "No," said she firmly, "I will conquer my silly fears; here, put the rope round me."

At that moment a wave tossed the boat so high that it came up almost to the level of the mast-head, and an involuntary cry rose from some of the men, who thought she must be dashed against it and upset. One of the men on the mast, seeing the boat at his very feet, made a sudden spring towards it, but it plunged into the hollow of the passing wave, and, missing his grasp, he fell with a wild shriek into the water. He was swept away instantly. This so unnerved Lucy that she almost fainted in her father's arms.

"Come," cried Bax, putting the end of the rope round his waist, "we must not trifle thus."

"The rope won't bear ye both," said Bluenose. "You're too heavy, lad."

"True," interrupted Guy, "let me do it. I'm light, and strong enough."

Bax, at once admitting the force of the argument, undid the rope without hesitation, and fastened it quickly round Guy's waist. The latter seized Lucy in his arms, and in a moment they were both swinging in the air over the wild sea.

Every incident in this thrilling scene now passed with the speed almost of thought. The boat rose under them. Bax at once let the rope run. Down they went, but a swirl in the treacherous waves swept the boat two or three fathoms to leeward. Instantly they were both in the sea, but Guy did not loosen his hold or lose his presence of mind for a moment. Bax hauled on the rope and raised him half out of the water for a few seconds; the boat made a wild sheer towards them, and the missionary uttered a cry of agony as he fancied his child was about to be run down, perhaps killed, before his eyes; but the cry was transformed into a shout of joy and thanksgiving when he saw one of the lifeboat's crew seize Guy by the hair, and another catch his daughter by a portion of her dress. They were quickly pulled into the boat.

To save the remainder was now a matter of less difficulty. The missionary was the only one left on the mast who was not

able more or less to take care of himself; but the joy consequent on seeing his daughter saved infused new vigour into his frame. He and the others were finally got off—Bax being the last to quit the wreck—and then the lifeboat pulled away from the dangerous shoals and made for the land.

Finding it impossible to reach Broadstairs, owing to the direction of the gale, they pulled in an oblique direction, and, after narrowly escaping an upset more than once, gained Deal beach not far from Sandown Castle, where the boat was run ashore.

Here there was a large concourse of boatmen and others awaiting them. The men in the lugger—seeing the lifeboat come up and feeling that the storm was almost too much for them, and that their services were not now required—had returned to the shore and spread the news.

The instant the lifeboat touched the shingle, a huge block and tackle were hooked on to her, the capstan connected with these was already manned, and the boat was run up high and dry with the crew in her.



Trapped by Grizzlies

CAPTAIN MAYNE REID

BASIL, Lucien, and François, the three sons of one of Napoleon's officers, Colonel Landi, share their father's life after the battle of Waterloo as a naturalist living in a French settlement on the Mississippi. They encounter many strange animals and experience adventures not even dreamed of by boys in Europe at that time. On one expedition they become trapped by some grizzly bears, and are fortunate to save themselves after an experience that would have daunted many grown men. This is one of the many stories told in *The Boy Hunters of the Mississippi*.

The young hunters laid aside their guns, drew their knives, and cut up the meat, so as the more conveniently to transport it to their camp.

As soon as the "mutton" was quartered, each shouldered a

piece, and commenced carrying it toward the ravine, intending to return and bring the rest at another load or two. On reaching the point where the path came up on the table, they saw that it would be difficult for them to descend with their burdens—as it is more easy to climb a precipice than to get down one. Another plan suggested itself; and that was, to pitch the pieces down before them to the bottom of the ravine. This they could accomplish without difficulty. It would do the meat no harm—as they intended to cut it up for jerking—and they could easily wash out the dirt and gravel at the spring, when they had got it all there.

This plan was at once adopted; and, taking up piece by piece they flung them down the chasm, and could see them lying among the rocks at the bottom. They then went back to the carcasses, took up fresh loads, and returned with them to the ravine.

As they stepped forward to fling them over, a sight met their eyes that caused each one to drop his load upon the spot. Down near the bottom of the ravine, and moving among the pieces of meat, was a hideous object—a huge and ill-shaped animal. Its great size—its long shaggy hair and greyish-brown colour—but, above all, its fierce aspect, left no doubt upon the minds of our hunters as to what sort of animal it was. There was no mistaking the dreaded monster of the mountains—the grizzly bear!

It was nearly twice the size of the common bear; and it differed from the latter in other respects. Its ears were more erect; its eyes, of burnt sienna colour, looked more fiery and glaring; its head and muzzle were broader—giving it an appearance of greater boldness and strength—and its long crescent-shaped claws, protruding from the shaggy covering of its feet, could be distinctly seen from the top of the cliff. With these it had just torn one of the pieces of mutton into smaller fragments, and was eagerly devouring it as the boys arrived on the height above. It was so busily engaged that it did not notice them.

All three, as we have said, dropped their loads on the ground; and, after pausing for a moment to look down, ran precipitately back for their guns. These they got hold of, and examined with care, looking to their caps and nipples. They now stole cautiously back to the ravine, and again looked over its edge. To their consternation, not one bear, but three of these horrid animals were busy with the meat below! One was smaller than either of

Trapped by Grizzlies

the others, and differed from them in colour. It was quite black; and might have passed for a full-grown bear of the black species. It was not that, however; but a large cub, of which the other two were the parents.

All three were tearing away at the fresh meat, evidently in high glee, and not caring to consider whence such a wind-fall had come, so long as they were getting the benefits of it. They occasionally uttered loud snorts—as if to express their gratification—and at intervals the old male one growled as the cub interfered with his eating. The female, on the contrary, as she tore the mutton into fragments, kept placing the daintiest morsels before the snout of her black progeny; and with playful strokes of her paw admonished it from time to time to fall to and eat. Sometimes they ate standing erect, and holding the meat between their fore-paws. At others they would place the piece upon a rock, and devour it at their leisure. Their jaws and claws were red with the blood—that still remained in the hastily-butchered meat—and this added to the ferocious aspect of the trio.

Our adventurers gazed down upon the scene with feelings of the utmost terror; and no wonder. They had heard such stories of the grizzly bear as would have inspired stouter hearts than theirs with feelings of the kind. They knew that no hunter, when dismounted, ever dares to attack this animal; and, even when on horseback and armed with his trusty rifle, he will only venture to do so when the ground is open, and he is sure of escape through the fleetness of his horse. They knew that hunters, even when in large parties, are often chased by a single bear of this kind, after each of them had given him a shot; for as many as twenty bullets have been fired into the body of a grizzly bear without bringing him to the ground. All these facts came into the minds of our boy hunters at the moment. No wonder they felt fear.

They were in a most perilous situation. The bears occupied the ravine. There was no other path by which they could get down to their horses. They had gone almost quite round the butte in their morning search. They had seen that it was precipitous on all sides, and they had since observed that the space between the ravine and their point of starting was the same. How, then, were they to get back to camp? There was no way but one—down the ravine—and the bears would be certain

to attack them should they attempt to descend that way.

The boys gazed at each other with terrified looks, repeating what they had to say in muttered whispers. All three well understood the danger of their position. Would the bears, after they had satisfied their hunger, go off and leave the ravine? No. The cave, which had been noticed, was their lair, beyond a doubt. Even if they should enter it, what certainty was there that they would not rush out upon the boys as they were clambering down? If so, they would easily overcome the latter among the loose rocks and bushes. One or all would fall a sacrifice should they attempt to descend. Might the bears not go out upon the plain? Perhaps they might go out as far as the spring, either for water, or led by some other want. But even so, they would then be able to see the hunters coming down, and could easily overtake them before the latter could reach the camp, or their horses. The horses had been set loose, and were now a good distance off upon the prairie. There was but little consolation in this thought, and less in that which occurred to them next; which was that the fierce brutes might not be satisfied at what they had eaten, but might take it into their heads to clamber up to the summit in search of more! This apprehension was the most fearful of all—as the boys knew that there was no place upon the table where they could long conceal themselves; and to get down, if once discovered and pursued would be utterly impossible.

Filled with these appalling thoughts, they crouched upon their hands and knees, now peering cautiously through the leaves of the aloes, and now whispering to each other the various plans of escape that suggested themselves. But all these plans ended in the faint hope that the bears might make a temporary absence from the ravine, and give them a chance to pass down. They could think of no other mode of extricating themselves from their dilemma.

At times the idea occurred to Basil of taking good aim and firing at one or other of the huge animals. François applauded this idea, while Lucien as strongly opposed it. The latter argued that it would only irritate the bears, and bring them up at once—that there was no chance of killing any of them by a single bullet, unless it passed through the brain or the heart; and this, aiming, as they must do, over a cliff, was a very problematical

affair. Even should one fall, the others would avenge the death of their comrade. A volley would not be likely to kill them all.

Lucien's arguments prevailed; and the less prudent brothers gave up their idea of firing, and remained, silently gazing down as before.

They lay for nearly half an hour watching and waiting. The bears finished their meal, having devoured every bit of the meat. Were they satisfied? No. A shoulder of mutton is but a morsel to the ravenous appetite of a grizzly bear; and it seemed only to have set theirs upon edge. They guessed whence their lunch had come—from above—and there was the place to go in search of their dinner. They looked up. The boys suddenly drew back their heads, hiding them behind the leaves. It was too late. The bears had seen them, and the next moment were galloping upward.

The first thought of our hunters was to fly, and with this intention they all sprang to their feet. But Basil, with a feeling of rage, was determined to try whether a rifle-bullet might not serve as a check to the advancing enemy. He levelled down the pass, and fired. His brothers, seeing him do so, followed his example—François emptying both barrels that had been loaded with buck-shot. One of the bears—the cub it was—tumbled back down the ravine; but after the volley the largest of all was seen clambering up, growling fiercely as he came. The hunters, not having time to reload, ran off over the table—scarcely knowing what direction to take.

When they had got half-way across it, all three stopped and looked back. The foremost bear was just rising above the cliff; and the next moment his long body was stretched out in pursuit of them. They had been in hopes that the pieces of meat might have attracted his attention, and drawn him aside. This did not happen. The meat was not directly upon his path; moreover, the animal appeared infuriated as he approached. He had been stung by the shot, and was bent upon revenge.

It was a terrible moment. The angry monster was within three hundred yards of them. In a few seconds he would be upon them, and one or the other must become his victim.

In crises like these, bold minds are the most apt to conceive expedients. So it was with that of Basil. On other occasions he was rash and often imprudent, but in moments of extreme

danger he became cool and collected, even more so than his philosophic brother, Lucien. A thought, which hitherto had strangely been overlooked both by himself and his brothers, now in the hour of peril came into his mind. He remembered that the grizzly bear is not a tree-climber! With the thought he shouted out—

“To the trees! to the trees!” at the same time embracing one of the pines, and sprawling upwards as fast as he could climb.

Both Lucien and François imitated his example, each taking to the tree that grew nearest him—for the bear was not twenty paces behind them, and there was no time to pick and choose. Before the latter could come up, however, all three were perched in the pines, as high among the branches as they could safely get.

The bear galloped forward, and seeing where they had gone, ran from tree to tree, growling with rage and disappointment. He rose upon his hind-legs, and endeavoured to reach the lowermost branches with his fore-paws—as if he intended to draw himself up, or drag the tree down. One by one he assailed the pines, shaking them with violence, and with his claws making the bark fly off in large pieces. One in particular—that upon which François had taken refuge—being a small tree, vibrated so rapidly under the powerful efforts of the brute, that its occupant was in danger of being dashed to the ground. But the fear of such an event caused François to put forth all his energies; and, encouraged by the shouts of Basil and Lucien, he held on manfully. The bear, after a while, seeing he could not shake him off, gave it up; and again tried his strength upon the trees that had been climbed by the others. This ended as before; except that the bear completely skinned off the bark as high as he could reach, and made such an impression upon the trunks with his teeth and claws, that the boys feared he might take it into his head to cut down the trees altogether. He could easily have accomplished this; but, fortunately for them, the grizzly bear is not gifted with reasoning faculties, else their fate would have been a terrible one indeed.

When he found, at length, that he could neither drag down the trees, nor shake the boys out of them, he gave up the attempt; and for a time walked from one to the other, backwards and forwards, like a sentry, now and then uttering a loud “sniff”, and at intervals growling fiercely. At length he stretched

his huge body along the ground, and appeared to sleep!

What had become of the female and the cub? Had both fallen by the shots fired at them? Neither had as yet made their appearance on the summit—for the boys from their perch could see every inch of its surface. They were still in the ravine then; but whether dead or alive could not be determined.

The young hunters were now in a worse situation than ever. They dared not venture out of the trees without the certainty of dropping into the jaws of the monster; and they were suffering pain as they sat straddled across the slender branches of the pines. Besides, they were thirsty—thirsty to an extreme degree. They had taken no water with them in the morning. The sun was fiercely hot; and, even while engaged in skinning the big-horns, they had been complaining for want of water. They now began to suffer from thirst more than from any other cause. Should the bear remain for any length of time, what should become of them? They must either drop down to be at once torn to pieces, or perish slowly where they sat. These were the alternatives!

They could make no change in their situation. Their guns were upon the ground, where in their haste they had flung them. They dared not descend to recover them. They were utterly helpless; and could do nothing but await the result. As if to tantalise them, they now beheld for the first time the objects of their far expedition—the animals they had so long desired to come up with—the buffaloes! Away to the south-west a multitude of black bodies were seen upon the plain, like crowds of men in dark clothing. They were moving to and fro, now uniting in masses, and now separating like the squadrons of an irregular army. Miles of the green prairie were mottled by their huge dark forms, or hidden altogether from the view. They seemed to be moving northward, along the level meadows that stretched between the butte and the Llano Estacado. This proved to be the case; for in a few minutes the headmost had pushed forward on a line with the butte; and our young hunters could distinguish the shaggy, lion-shaped bodies of the bulls that formed the vanguard of the "gang". Under other circumstances this would have been a glad sight indeed. As it was, it only served to render their situation more intolerable. The buffaloes were passing to the north. Even should they themselves escape, after a time they

might not be able to overtake them; and although they could distinguish none that were white—for the main body was a great way off—it was highly probable that in so large a herd one or more of these would be found.

As all three continued to watch the black multitudes rolling past, an exclamation, or rather a shout of joy, was uttered by Basil. He was upon a tree that stood apart from the others and gave him an unobstructed view of the plains to the west.

“*Voilà! yonder! yonder!*” he cried: “see! in the middle of the drove! See, brothers!—it shines in the sun—white—white! Huzza!—huzza!”

Basil’s speech was scarcely coherent. Neither was that of his brothers, when they beheld the object to which he had alluded. It could be nothing else, all believed, than the object of their long wild hunt—a white buffalo. All three huzzaed loudly, and for a moment forgot the peril of their position. Their shouts started the grizzly monster below, who, lazily rising to his feet, once more commenced growling and shuffling about among the trees. The sight of him soon restored the hunters to a sense of the fearful realities that surrounded them.

For hours they sat upon their painful perch—now glancing downward at the fierce gaoler that watched unweariedly below—now gazing out upon the plain, where the dusky droves still continued to move. For hours the buffaloes kept passing northward, until the setting sun glanced redly from their brown bodies. Once or twice again the boys thought they saw white ones in the herd; but their eyes had grown dim with watching, and the pain which they endured now rendered them indifferent to aught else than their own misery. Despair had conquered hope—for they were choking with thirst—and death stared them in the face.

After a long while the bear lay down, and placing his fore-paws over his head appeared once more to sleep. Basil could stand it no longer; and now resolved to make an effort to escape. At all events he would try to bring about some change in their painful situation.

Cautioning his brothers to remain silent, he slipped down from his tree; and, with the stealthy tread of a cat, crept over the ground in search of his rifle. He soon laid hands upon it; and then, returning to his tree, climbed up again. The shaking of the branches as he did so, awoke the bear; who sprang to his

feet, and rushed towards the tree. Had he been a moment sooner, it would have been ill for Basil, for the snout of the animal, as he reared upward against the trunk, almost touched the boy's feet. It was an "inch of a miss as good as a mile", and Basil was saved. The next moment he was seated among the branches, and leisurely loading his rifle!

Strange to say, the bear appeared to comprehend this movement. As if aware of his danger, he kept out farther from the trees; and, while rambling about now, for the first time, stumbled upon what remained of the carcasses of the big-horns. These he proceeded to tear up and devour. He was still within range of the rifle, though not for a sure shot; but Basil, who knew he could load again, was determined either to force him farther off, or bring him within reach; and with this intent he took aim and fired. The bullet hit the bear in the fore-shoulder, for he was seen to turn his head and tear at the spot with his teeth, all the while growling with rage and pain. Strange to say, he still continued to devour the meat!

Again Basil loaded and fired as before. This time the animal received the shot about the head, which caused him to make fresh demonstrations of his fury. He dropped his prey, and galloped back among the trees, first clutching one and then another, making repeated efforts to drag them down. He at length came to Basil's tree, and seized it in his fierce hug. This was exactly what the young hunter wanted. He had hastily reloaded, and as the bear stood upright under the branches, he leant downwards until the muzzle of his rifle almost touched the snout of the animal. Then came the report—a stream of fire was poured into the very face of the bear—and a crashing sound followed. As the smoke cleared off, the huge body was seen kicking and sprawling upon the ground. The leaden messenger had done its work. It had passed through the brain; and in a few seconds the shaggy monster lay motionless upon the earth.

The boys now dropped from the trees. François and Lucien ran for their guns, and all three having loaded with care, proceeded toward the ravine. They stayed not to examine the enemy that had been slain. Thirst urged them on, and they thought only of getting to the spring below. They were full of hope that the she-bear and her cub had been killed by their

first fire, and that they would now find the road clear.

What was their disappointment when, on looking down the ravine, they saw the cub lying doubled up, near the bottom, and the old one standing sentry over it! The cub was evidently dead. So much the worse—as the mother would not now leave it for a moment, and both were directly in the path. The latter was moving backward and forward upon a ledge of rock, at intervals approaching the cub and tossing its body with her snout, and then uttering a low querulous moan, that was painful to listen to!

The hunters saw at once that their situation was as bad as ever. Their retreat was cut off by the infuriated mother, who might remain where she was for an indefinite time. Should they fire down upon her, and take the chances of once more escaping to the trees? This was an alternative which they had reason to dread. Their painful experience decided them against it. What then? Remain until after nightfall, and try to steal past in the darkness? Perhaps the bear might retire to her cave, and give them an opportunity to do so. But in the meantime they were dying of thirst!

At this moment a happy idea suggested itself to Lucien. He saw the cactus plants growing near. There were large globes of the echinocactus. He remembered having read that these often assuaged the thirst of the desert traveller. The plants were soon reached, and their succulent masses laid open by the knives of the hunters. The cool watery fibres were applied to their lips; and in a few minutes their thirst was alleviated and almost forgotten. Still the bear occupied the ravine, and so long as she remained there, there was no possible chance of their getting back to camp. They saw, however, that they could do nothing better than wait for the night, in hopes that the darkness might bring about something in their favour.

Night soon came on, but not darkness. It chanced to be a clear moonlight; and they saw at once that it would then be quite as perilous to go down the ravine as it had been during the day. They could hear the snorting and growling of the monster below; and they knew she still held the pass. Should they attempt to descend, she would discover them long before they could get down. She could hear them clambering among the rocks and bushes. The advantage would be hers, as she could attack them unawares. Besides, even had the coast been quite clear, they

would have found it difficult to get down the steep descent in the night. They dared not attempt it. After much deliberation, therefore, they resolved to wait for the morning.

Throughout all the livelong night they kept awake. They dared not go to sleep, unless by perching themselves in the trees; as they knew not the moment the bear might come up to the summit. Sleeping upon the slender branch of a mountain pine is more painful than pleasant; and all three preferred keeping awake.

Morning broke at length. The first light showed that the shaggy sentinel was still at her post. She sat upon the same spot, as though she was guarding her dead offspring. The young hunters, but particularly Basil, began to grow impatient. They were hungry, though there were still left some fragments of the wild mutton, which they could have eaten. But they were thirsty as well. The juice of the cactus allayed, but did not quench, their thirst. They longed for a draught of cool water from the spring below. The buffaloes, too, were gone northward, "on the run". They might never overtake them. They might never again have such an opportunity of procuring that for which they had endured all this suffering. These thoughts influenced all three, but Basil more than any. Some attempt must be made to reach the plain, and escape from their elevated prison.

Basil proposed provoking the bear, by firing upon her. She would pursue them, he urged, as the other had done, and meet with a similar fate. This might have succeeded, but it would have been a dangerous experiment. Lucien suggested that two of them should go round the edge of the precipice and examine it more carefully, while the third kept a watch upon the bear. Perhaps there might yet be found some other path that led to the plain. This offered but a faint hope; still it would take only a few minutes to make the examination, and Lucien's proposal was therefore agreed to.

"If we only had a rope," suggested François, "we could let ourselves over the cliff, and then the old grizzly might stay there for ever, if she pleased."

"Ha!" shouted Basil, as if some plan had suddenly come into his mind, "what dunces we have been! Why did we not think of it before? Come, brothers! I'll get you down in the twinkling of an eye—come!"

As Basil uttered these words, he strode off towards the spot where they had butchered the big-horns. On reaching it he drew his hunting-knife; and having spread out one of the skins proceeded to cut it into strips. Lucien, at once guessing his design, assisted him in the operation; while François was sent back to the head of the ravine, in order to watch the bear.

In a few minutes the brothers had cut up both of the hides, until the ground was covered with long strips. These they knotted firmly together—placing cross-pieces of pine branches in the knots—until they had made a raw-hide rope over one hundred feet in length!

They now proceeded to a convenient point of the cliff—where a pine-tree grew near its edge—and tied one end of the new-made rope around the trunk. To the other end they fastened the three guns—for François had arrived upon the ground—and, along with these, a large stone—in order to test the strength of the rope before any of themselves should venture upon it. All these things were now lowered down until they could see them resting upon the prairie below.

The rope was next made taut above; and the weight of the stone kept all fast below. François slipped down the rope first. There was but little difficulty in his doing so, as the pieces of wood formed rests, or steps, that prevented him from sliding too fast. Lucien followed next, and then Basil; so that in less than half an hour from the time that this plan of escape had occurred to them, all three found themselves safe upon the level of the prairie!

They did not waste time when they had got there. The whole party hurried in the direction of their horses. These were soon reached, caught, and saddled; and our hunters, now that they could mount at any moment they pleased, felt themselves safe.

They resolved, however, to remain no longer by the butte, but to ride away from it, as soon as they had eaten a morsel. A small fire was, therefore, kindled; and a piece of bear-meat, hastily broiled, satisfied their hunger. Basil would have gone back on horseback, to attack the old she-bear in the ravine; but the more prudent Lucien dissuaded him: and, holding their horses in readiness, they packed their camp equipments, and once more took the route.

